

September 25, 1996
COLUMN
number of Danes
who die alone up by
10% in 10 years

Arabs to launch satellite ahead of schedule

DUBAI (AFP) — Arab states decided on Wednesday to launch another commercial satellite a year ahead of schedule to meet demand, officials said. The satellite, Arabsat 2-B, will be launched in November instead of November 1997, said Mohammad Al Shahri, director general of the Arab Space Communications Corporation (Arabsat). "The decision is designed to support Arab satellites in orbit and face growing demand for satellite channels," Mr. Shahri told reporters after a board meeting in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) port of Dubai. He did not say who would put the satellite in orbit but Arabsat has previously relied on France's acropatiale for the production of its satellites and Europe's rocket Ariane for their launch.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية - الراي

France spells out rifts with U.S.

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Spelling out differences with Washington on key issues, France's foreign minister Wednesday criticised trade laws that punish foreign firms and endorsed Boutros Gbali's reappointment as U.N. chief. "France and Europe do not accept that one country, even if it is the most powerful, is trying to regulate world trade by itself by means of decisions that have extra-territorial scope," Foreign Minister Herve de Charette told the annual debate of the U.N. General Assembly. "One should not doubt the firmness of French and European reactions were such measures actually to be implemented," he added. Displaying a widely different view from that of Washington, Mr. De Charette praised Mr. Gbali for his "determination, vision of the future and firmness."

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4 killed and scores wounded in Israeli firing on Palestinian protesters against Jerusalem tunnel

Combined agency dispatches

IN THE BLOODIEST clashes since the 1993 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accords, Israeli soldiers bailed Palestinian policemen and civilians in this self-rule area Wednesday, leaving at least four Palestinians dead and more than 200 wounded, officials said.

Israeli troops fired live ammunition, rubber bullets and tear-gas throughout the day against stone-throwing youths protesting an Israeli decision to extend a controversial archaeological tunnel near Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque. "We have so far four dead and at least six or seven in very critical condition and I expect some of them to die overnight," said the director of Samallah hospital, Shawi Harb.

A Palestinian police spokesman said "at least two" of the dead were policemen and sources said another was a 15-year-old boy.

Dr. Harb said 16 of the casualties had gunshot wounds, while the others were injured by rubber bullets, beatings and tear-gas.

On the Israeli side, at least six soldiers were wounded including three who were in fair condition and three who were slightly injured, an army spokesman said.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat blamed the right-wing government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and its repeated violation of past peace agreements for the upheaval and cancelled negotiations that were planned for Thursday.

Mr. Netanyahu, who was visiting Paris, charged that the protests were "orchestrated" to put political pressure on his government and vowed that he would not be forced into taking any action, although he also called for a quick resumption of negotiations to



An elderly Palestinian woman grabs an Israeli border policeman's club during demonstrations at the Damascus Gate in Arab East Jerusalem on Wednesday (Reuters photo)

calm the situation.

Mr. Netanyahu also said he called Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to ask for his intervention with the Palestinian side in a bid to lower tensions.

Thousands of Palestinians protested across the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and in East Jerusalem over the Al Aqsa tunnel, but the worst violence was in Ramallah.

Palestinian officials said Palestinian police opened fire on the Israelis in anger after watching the soldiers repeatedly shoot into crowds of demonstrators.

The protests erupted over a decision by Israeli authorities to open a new entrance to an archaeological tunnel running under the Muslim quarter in East Jerusalem's Old City, near the Al Aqsa Mosque compound.

Mr. Arafat condemned the

tunnel project as an attempt to undermine the Arab presence in the Holy City and blamed Israel for the subsequent upheaval.

"Israel caused this escalation by repressing our people who are protesting against violations of our peace accords and especially the tunnel under our holy sites in Jerusalem," he said.

In Paris, Mr. Netanyahu dismissed Palestinian concern over the tunnel.

"I think there is a combination here of misinformation and deliberate disinformation that is an attempt to whip up passions without any grounding in fact," he contended.

In New York, a U.S. State Department spokesman implicitly criticised Israel over the archaeological excavations near the Al Aqsa Mosque, saying they "compli-

cate" relations between Israel and Palestinians.

"The parties to the (peace process) should avoid creating new issues that would further complicate the negotiation and complicate the situation on the ground," said spokesman Nicholas Burns.

Mr. Burns would not confirm that the statement was a criticism or warning directed to the Israeli government, which has sought to downplay Palestinian anger over the digging.

"I am very careful not to target one side or the other," he said.

Mr. Burns also voiced Washington's "great concern" about the situation, and emphasised that "the United States urges all sides to move quickly to restore calm, to avoid further violence and to exercise restraint."

He added that Jerusalem is

one of the "final status issues," which he said "should be discussed in a calm and peaceful setting."

"Once calm is restored," he concluded, Washington "will strongly advise the parties to resume the negotiating process."

The U.S. Ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk held talks with Israeli government officials and the State Department's coordinator for the Middle East, Dennis Ross, spoke to Netanyahu aide Dore Gold.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid moved up his departure for New York to ask the United Nations to take action against Israel.

The clashes in Ramallah began when more than 1,000 Palestinians marched along the main highway to protest against the tunnel completion.

King calls for international probe into effects of Israeli actions in Jerusalem

Combined agency dispatches

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein called Wednesday for an international probe into the effects of Israel's tunnel work skirting Al Aqsa Mosque in Arab East Jerusalem.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, meanwhile, condemned the excavation as a violation of the Holy City's sanctity.

Israel's reopening on Tuesday of a tunnel from the city's Muslim quarter to the Western Wall on Monday sparked violent demonstrations in which four Palestinians were killed and some 300 injured in clashes with Israeli troops in the West Bank town of Ramallah and in Jerusalem.

On a visit to Bahrain, King Hussein called for an international committee to examine any structural damage from the extension of the tunnel and condemned the Israeli excavation carried out on Monday night.

King arrives in Qatar, hails his talks in Bahrain

DOHA (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein said Wednesday that his talks with Bahraini leaders showed identical views with those of Jordan and gave an impetus for further strengthening of Jordan's relations with the Arab Gulf states.

Speaking before leaving Manama for Qatar on the second leg of his current tour of the Gulf states, King Hussein said: "I have exerted efforts in the past and I will continue these efforts in the future to strengthen these ties. I will continue to serve my brothers in the Gulf and help them to solve all lingering problems."

"Arab leaders should to open candid discussions and talks aimed at strengthening future relations," the King added.

King Hussein, who held talks with the Bahraini leaders on Arab affairs and the Middle East question, said: "There is a need for a joint Arab stand with regard to the peace process to ensure the restoration of all Arab rights including the rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland and the rights of all the other Arab countries

(Continued on page 7)

"Jordan is surprised by these measures which have struck a blow against the rights of all Arabs and Muslims" in Jerusalem, he told a press conference, adding

that the digging was "endangering the structure of Al Aqsa Mosque."

Crown Prince Hassan

(Continued on page 7)

Father confesses to poisoning children because of 'jealousy'

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The father of the two children who died in mysterious circumstances two weeks ago at their apartment has confessed to poisoning them because of "family problems and jealousy," police said Wednesday.

The death on Sept. 11 of Hanin, eight, and Hani, six, in their third-floor apartment in Abu Oneizah Housing Complex sent shockwaves across the Jordanian society and Wednesday's police announcement partially ended speculation over how and why the children died/were killed.

Police Chief Lieutenant General Nasouh Moheiddin said Mazen Masri, 34, confessed late Tuesday to "killing his two children by giving them two cyanide pills he had recently purchased in Canada."

Mr. Masri was arrested last week shortly after extensive forensic tests established that cyanide had killed the two children.

Prosecutor General Abdul Aziz Rawashdeh, who is handling the case, said Mr.



Hani



Hanin

Mazen Masri admitted having perished quarrels with his wife and cited jealousy as the motive for the murder.

"Mr. Masri said that his wife paid more attention to his children, and that the children were more

(Continued on page 7)

Regent meets UAE envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Wednesday received at the Royal Court, United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan's adviser, Saeed Ben Salmaan, founder of Ajman University. The meeting centred on developing relations between Jordanian and UAE universities and the role of the private universities in developing educational sector.

Two Baathists released on bail

AMMAN (AFP) — Two officials of the pro-Iraq Baath Party, whom Jordan accused of involvement in bread riots last month, were released Wednesday on bail, official sources said. The decision to release Jordan Arab Socialist Baath Party Secretary General Tayssir Homsri and his deputy Adam Abdullah was made by the attorney general of the State Security Court.

Israel signs test ban treaty

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy on Wednesday signed the global nuclear test ban treaty. Israel is believed to have nuclear weapons.

Iraq again using radars in 'no-fly' zone — U.S.

MANAMA (Agencies) — Iraq has again used its air defence systems to track U.S. and allied warplanes patrolling the "no-fly" zone in the south, but is keeping its promise not to fire at aircraft, a U.S. military official said Wednesday.

"We have picked up a couple of new Iraqi radar indications," said Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Bourland, spokesman for the Joint Task Force South West Asia in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Col. Bourland told the Associated Press in a telephone interview that the radar signals from Iraq's air defence encampments were picked up Tuesday and Monday.

Last Thursday Iraq ceased its radar activity on U.S. and allied war planes flying the expanded "no fly" zone in the south but resumed the surveillance activity Monday.

"Their turning systems on is a matter of concern for us but it is not a serious threat," Col. Bourland said.

Col. Bourland said that U.S. and allied war planes fly more than 100 sorties daily as part of Operation Southern Watch and have not met any serious challenges since Iraq agreed to stop firing at aircraft earlier this month.

"Iraqi warplanes have

not violated the (southern) "no-fly" zone ... I guess they have learned a good lesson ... and we are ready to teach them some more in case it's needed," Col. Bourland said.

The latest tension began after Iraq sent troops into a Kurdish "safe haven" in northern Iraq in late August. The United States retaliated by firing cruise missiles at air defence installations in southern Iraq early this month.

The confrontation escalated when Iraq fired missiles at U.S. and allied warplanes patrolling the "no-fly" zones.

Tensions have cooled somewhat since Iraq pledged to halt firing at coalition planes patrolling air exclusion zones.

In response to the tension with Iraq early this month the United States beefed up forces in the region.

Iraq has asked Arab governments with Western ties to push for an end to the "no-fly" zones, an official said Wednesday.

Information and Culture Minister Abdul Ghani Abdel Gafur sent messages to his Syrian, Saudi and Egyptian counterparts asking for help in lifting the bans imposed by the United States, Britain and France, an Iraqi official said.

Israeli jets raid Lebanon as truce committee meets

NAQOURA, Lebanon (AFP) — Israeli fighter-bombers raided a stronghold of the Hizbollah group in South Lebanon on Wednesday after an attack on an Israeli-occupied border zone, security sources said.

One of the planes fired two missiles near Luwayze, on the Iqlim Al Tuffah heights overlooking the port city of Sidon. There were no reports of victims.

Hizbollah earlier shelled an Israeli position at Bir Kellah, inside the occupied zone, Hizbollah and Lebanese security sources said, again without giving a casualty toll.

But the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia, which is allied with Israel, said Hizbollah did not attack the zone on Wednesday.

In Beirut, a spokesman for the Islamic Resistance, the military arm of Hizbollah, said that its shells at Bir Kellah had "hit their targets with precision."

The air raid came as a five-nation truce monitoring committee met for the third time this week at a U.N. post in the border town of Naqoura after Beirut complained of Israeli shelling.

The truce committee — grouping Israel, Lebanon, Syria, France and the United States — met behind closed doors.

The committee decided to hold its latest session after Lebanon complained of Israeli shelling on Tuesday that damaged a home in the southern village of Arab Salim.

The committee already held a day-long meeting Tuesday over earlier violation charges filed by both Lebanon and Israel. The group also met for six hours on Sunday in Naqoura.

Lebanon called Sunday's session after two civilians were wounded and several homes damaged by Israeli shelling and air strikes north of a buffer zone occupied by Israel.

Israel likewise requested the meeting after two of its soldiers were killed in a clash last Thursday with Hizbollah guerrillas. It said the attack was launched from villages.

An April 26 accord to end Israel's 17-day air and artillery blitz against suspected Hizbollah targets banned attacks on civilian areas or raids launched from villages.

The body of a fighter from the pro-Syrian Shiite Muslim Amal group, killed Tuesday, was taken by the Israeli army to a hospital in Marjayoun, inside the occupied zone, police said Wednesday.

Opposition angry over premier's comments, wants King's action

AMMAN (J.T.) — The opposition on Wednesday reacted angrily to statements made by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabarihi this week and called on His Majesty the King to dismiss the government.

"We, deputies of the opposition, advise His Majesty the King that the people are fed up with the government of Mr. Kabarihi," the 23, mainly Islamic deputies said in a statement.

The prime minister had on Monday dismissed the opposition noon that his government was in crisis and instead described the opposition as "people in crisis."

Mr. Kabarihi challenged the opposition to provide viable options to solving the country's problems of poverty, unemployment, indebtedness and corruption instead of criticising the government policies and placing obstacles on the path of reform.

The opposition, 15 Islamic

Action Front (IAF) deputies and eight leftist and pan-Arab nationalists, returned in a very strongly worded statement by accusing the government and the prime minister of being in crisis and of being responsible for the decisions, which, they said, led to a sharp decline in standards of living of people and to souring Jordan's relations with Iraq and other Arab countries.

A government spokesperson commented on the opposition's statement by saying that instead of responding to the government's call for joining hands towards collectively dealing with common ills, the opposition, "which represents no more than 20 per cent of Parliament," chose to ignore appeals for solidarity and cohesion and instead resorted to personal attacks against the person of the prime minister.

The spokesperson said the opposition chose to ignore the fact that it is in the minority,

adding that it cannot continue to pretend that it speaks for the people and must eventually respect the views of the majority.

The opposition accused the government of having no grassroots political support and of "losing balance after starting wars with the people, the political parties, the Lower House of Parliament and with the Islamic movement."

The government spokesperson reiterated that the opposition was in real crisis and it had to choose between cooperating with the majority or lose touch with reality.

"They have provided no alternatives and they have no programmes or policies to deal with the existing challenges," the spokesperson said.

The opposition statement said that the prime minister was to blame for the crisis "he made with the hungry people who are

(Continued on page 7)

Taleban could make strictest Islamic state

KABUL (AFP) — The Taleban militia has often been welcomed with open arms by war-weary people in the two-thirds of Afghanistan it has seized in two years.

But it is so conservative that many observers say it could produce the most hard-line Islamic regime in the world if it takes the Afghan capital Kabul and comes to power — the group's ultimate goal.

Tales of compulsory beards for men and other imposed on men in areas they control have scared many inhabitants of the capital.

In their first year of existence, the militiamen, who came out of Koranic schools of Pakistan in late 1994, marched through the southern half of the battered country with hardly a shot fired.

Afghans welcomed the returned fighters, most of whom come from the south, as a new and purifying force which they hoped would wipe out the rampant corruption and endemic banditry.

They also desperately hoped the apparently powerful Taleban could end the country's factional war by neutralising the nine or so groups who have been battling for power for nearly four years.

The militia garners its support through repeated claims that it is fighting for "peace, security and stability," an Afghan watcher said.

"There is a great deal of goodwill" for the Taleban, who continue to advance with local "cooperation," he added.

They have denounced the former rebel groups, who they say have allowed in-

fighting, corruption and non-Islamic values to cripple the country. The Taleban has vowed to eradicate them from positions of power.

Two weeks ago, when they marched into the key eastern city of Jalalabad, 70 kilometres from Kabul, residents reportedly cheered and waved white flags — the Taleban trademark.

Locals also distributed food in the city, formerly ruled by a neutral council, to celebrate the arrival of the Taleban era they hoped would bring stability and peace.

But the fighters, who — despite the fact that the vast majority are illiterate — have styled themselves as "Islamic students" striving to restore traditional moral values, are not universally popular.

The ethnic Pashtun fighters enraged the traditionally free-thinking people of Herat, now under Taleban control, by closing girls' schools and banning women, with the exception of some medical workers, from public workplaces.

The move forced the charity, Save the Children U.K., to pull out of Taleban-controlled territory. There were street marches by women in Kabul accusing the militia of violating women's rights.

Most women in Kabul, the outskirts of which the Taleban reached Wednesday, are terrified of the restrictions a Taleban government would impose.

Many of them work, wear flimsy veils, rather than the impenetrable all-over veils demanded by the militia leaders, and expect a greater say in their lives than their provincial sisters.

Iran calls on Muslims to fight Israeli 'expansionism'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Wednesday criticised the extension of an archaeological tunnel under Jerusalem's Old City near the Al Aqsa Mosque and urged Muslim countries to fight Israeli "expansionism."

"The implementation of this project" in Jerusalem "has led to a greater domination by the Zionist regime over the city and seriously threatens the Muslims' top shrine," Iran's state radio said.

"We expect the Islamic World to adopt a united stand to confront the Zionist regime's anti-Islamic policies and pave the way for ending its domination over this Islamic city and other occupied territory," it added.

Israel on Monday night opened a new entrance to an existing tunnel running from the Western wall, along the supporting wall

of the Al Aqsa Mosque compound and into the old city's Muslim quarter.

The move sparked violent protests across the Palestinian territories on Wednesday in which dozens were injured and prompted Palestinian leaders to cancel the scheduled resumption of peace negotiations with Israel on Thursday.

Iran is staunchly opposed to any deal with Israel, which it wants destroyed, and has urged Arab countries to quit the Middle East peace process.

The Iranian Radio appealed to Arab leaders negotiating with Israel to "understand that they cannot regain their rights through peaceful means."

"The experiences of the past have shown that the Zionist regime carries forward its expansionist policies while hypocritically preaching peace," it charged.



PROTESTS IN GAZA: Hundreds of Palestinians demonstrate in the Palestinian-ruled Gaza on Wednesday in answer to a call by the Palestinian National Authority to demonstrate against Israel's opening of a tunnel in Jerusalem's walled Old City (see story on page 1) (Reuters photo)

South Indian state hardest-hit by UAE move to oust illegal residents

TRIVANDRUM (R) — India's southern state of Kerala, hit hardest by a Gulf crackdown on illegal workers, is bracing for the influx of thousands of people returning to a jobless future, officials said on Wednesday.

They said some 30,000 Malayalees, the name given to people from Kerala, forced home by a clampdown on illegal labour in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), would need help resettling.

"Rehabilitating the returned workers is the immediate problem. The idle men could create socio-economic problems," one official said.

The state government is proposing to establish a \$196 million welfare programme with central government help.

Kerala, the only state to boast a literacy rate of more than 90 per cent, already has five million unemployed, its economy will also be hit by

the loss of remittances from workers in the UAE.

At least 2.5 million people belonging to families of the returning workers would be badly affected, the officials said.

"The post office economy of the state will be badly hit when remittances from the Gulf dwindle," said Planning Board Vice Chairman I.S. Gulati.

The Gulf workers from Kerala normally send home money through the post offices that dot the villages across the lush, green state, where 30 million people live.

Officials estimate a drop of 1.0 billion rupees (\$28.20 million) in remittances into Kerala from the Gulf every year.

The Gulf returnees' and employees' organisation put the figure at three billion rupees.

Gulf remittances play a key role in the state's economic development that

includes a booming construction industry.

"Land and real estate prices are likely to crash in the near future," said a planning board official.

He said the situation could worsen, as more Gulf countries were expected to tighten their labour laws to flush out illegal workers from Asian countries.

"There will be a chain reaction to the UAE move. The sultanate of Oman has also initiated some action," the official said. "The Gulf bubble may burst."

Planets of workers from the UAE have begun arriving in the state capital of Thiruvandrum and in Cochin and Calicut.

The UAE has given illegal workers, estimated at over 100,000, a two-month amnesty to get their documents in order or quit the country by Sept. 30.

Dileep, 24, said he and five others had spent 12 days at sea, huddled in a fishing

boat, sharing little food and water before arriving in Kerala.

Dileep, who paid 25,000 rupees (\$700) two years ago to get to the Gulf, left the UAE in the first week of this month as he still had no valid documents.

"Our journey to the UAE was also similar — travelling in fishing boats for weeks to reach Dubai in search of a job," he recalled.

Some illegal workers were relieved to be back home.

"The amnesty is a blessing in disguise for people like me, trapped in a foreign land with no travel documents at all," said Ramesan, who worked as a helper in a Dubai fibre glass factory.

V. Venu, an official in charge of expatriate Indians, said letters were pouring in from Gulf workers seeking jobs.

"But some of them still have not lost hope of going back to the Gulf," he said.

Kuwait vows to acquire most advanced weapons

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait will buy the world's best weapons and use the best advisors as it "slowly but surely" bolsters its army which was routed in the 1990 Iraqi invasion, the defence minister pledged Wednesday.

Kuwait would continue "to buy the best weapons in the world and get the best people to train our soldiers," Defence Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al Hammud Al Sabah told reporters at a meeting to welcome the U.S. military to Kuwait.

He said efforts to build up the Kuwaiti army were going "slowly but surely," and hoped the army would hit its target to increase the number of troops by the year 2000, although he did not say what that target was.

Kuwait currently has some 20,000 regulars and reservists in the armed

forces.

"Here we are standing shoulder to shoulder to safeguard the security of the region, and the sovereignty of Kuwait," Sheikh Ahmad told the U.S. military staff present.

As part of a military buildup in the past two weeks Washington has sent F-117 stealth bombers and F-16 fighter bombers to Kuwait, along with 3,000 extra ground troops and patriot missiles to deter Iraqi threats.

The United States is the main weapons supplier to Kuwait followed by Britain and France, the three leaders of the coalition forces that repelled the Iraqi troops.

Kuwait embarked on a \$12-billion rearmament drive after liberation from seven months of Iraqi occupation in 1991.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Egyptian, Libyan, Jordanian grids to be linked

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt plans to connect its electricity grid to that of Libya and Jordan beginning in June 1997, Power Minister Maher Abaza said in remarks published Wednesday. "A link between the power systems of Egypt and Libya will be made next June as part of the plan to connect Egypt's electricity grid with that of North Africa," he told the government newspaper Al Gomhuriya. Establishing such a hookup between Egypt and Libya would cost an estimated \$46 million, he said. Mr. Abaza said a simultaneous connection would be made between the power grids of Egypt and Jordan, making Cairo a hub between the countries of north Africa and the Middle East.

S. Arabia receives second British mine sweepers

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia has taken possession of a second British mine sweeper as part of an oil-for-arms deal, a Western diplomat based in the Saudi capital Riyadh said on Wednesday. "This is the second mine hunter of three," he told Reuters. "It was accepted in the United Kingdom and will sail out in the coming weeks to Saudi Arabia." The official Saudi Press Agency said the mine sweeper had been received in the British port of Southampton on Tuesday. The diplomat said the first of the ships, procured under the deal known as Al Yamamah, was delivered to Saudi Arabia early in 1996. The third and final vessel is to be delivered in 1997, he said, but no exact date was available. In the mid-1980s, Riyadh turned to London for its defence needs after Washington turned it down. Saudi Arabia eventually awarded Britain two major oil-for-arms deals worth more than \$20 billion for Tornado, Hawk and PC-9 military aircraft, specialised naval vessels and other hardware and services.

Militants shoot at Egypt boat, no casualties

CAIRO (R) — Suspected anti-government militants shot at a convoy of boats cruising up the Nile from the Egyptian town of Mallawi but there were no tourists aboard, security sources said on Wednesday. The crews of the six ships, bound for Abu Qirgas some 230 kilometres south of Cairo, were unharmed but some window panes were broken, the sources said. They said the gunmen, thought to be members of the Gama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic Group) fighting to overthrow the state, sprayed the cruisers on Tuesday with machinegun fire. It was the first attack on a tourist ship in at least two years. Armed groups had often targeted cruisers in their four-year-old battle against the government. Almost 1,000 people have been killed and scores wounded in the political violence.

Turkish army continues sweep against Kurdish rebels

TUNCALI, Turkey (AFP) — Turkish government forces Wednesday continued a massive operation against Kurdish rebels in Turkey's eastern provinces that has left 57 people dead in the past three days.

Turkish warplanes reinforced the sweep, launched last week, strafing the Tunceli area Monday before

troops entered the Kinzir forest Tuesday in search of separatists.

Altogether 47 rebels of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), six Turkish soldiers and four pro-government militia were killed in fighting in the eastern provinces, authorities said.

The report said 32 rebels were killed in operations near

the border with Syria and Iraq, while 15 others died in clashes in the Tunceli area.

The Turkish army has increased its activity against Kurdish separatists in the eastern and southeastern provinces, in a bid to crush the rebels before winter sets in and slows military operations.

The mountainous area is

dotted with caves where the rebels can hide. The army mounted a similar operation last year to root out Kurdish fighters.

The PKK has been fighting Ankara for a separate homeland in southeastern Turkey since 1984.

Close to 20,000 civilians, rebels and troops have died in the fighting.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:05 Jonny Quest
15:30 UEFA Football Match
17:01 News Flash
17:02 Circus
17:30 Show — Surprise Sur
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Ushuaia
19:30 News Headlines
19:33 Comedy — Here's Lucy
20:00 Doc. — In Good Company
20:30 Challenges
21:10 Star Trek — The Next Generation
22:00 News in English
22:25 Feature Film
23:59 Comedy — Family Matters

PRAYER TIMES

04:04 Fajr
05:22 Sunrise Doha
11:27 Dhuhr
14:53 Asr
17:33 Maghreh
18:50 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel.
771751
Armenian International Church
Tel. 827126
Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932
Church of Nazarene Tel.
675691
The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Relative warm weather conditions will prevail during the weekend with temperatures dropping but remaining higher than average by 3-4 degrees centigrade. Winds will be north-westerly to easterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be hot, northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Amman 21/34
Aqaba 25/40

Deserts 18/36
Jordan Valley 34/40
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 37, Aqaba 42 Humidity
readings: Amman 17 per cent.
Aqaba 22 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mubshles Mazahrah 820425
Dr. Wissam Hazyin 748563
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyin 620115
Dr. Munther Al Qasbi 779959
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najih pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazin Abu Bakir 276852
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Salah Al Safarini 987565
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 621111.

637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
Akileh Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983323
Zarqa National Hospital 09900560
Ibn Sina Hospital 109986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital 09990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital 02127555
Greek Catholic Hospital 021272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital 021247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital 031314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel.

108153200 where it should always be verified.
Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08152700 or 081532501.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:45 Sanaa (RJ)
09:05 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
09:20 Beirut (RJ)
09:30 New Delhi (RJ)
09:35 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
10:05 Colombo (RJ)
15:40 Bangkok (RJ)
16:10 Casablanca (RJ)
16:20 Moscow (RJ)
16:30 London (RJ)
16:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:00 Bangkok, Culcuta (RJ)
18:15 Athens (RJ)
19:00 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
19:25 Rome (RJ)
23:15 Lamaca (RJ)
Other Flights
06:45 Beirut, London (BA)
07:45 Beirut (ME)
13:30 Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)
14:30 Riyadh (SV)
14:30 Algiers (AF)
20:25 Cairo (MS)
21:15 Tel Aviv (LY)
22:55 Damascus, Paris (AF)
23:40 Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)
03:00 Rome (AZ)
05:00 Istanbul (TK)
05:40 London (KJ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights
09:00 Aqaba (RW)
19:30 Aqaba (from Tel Aviv) (RW)
08:50 Aqaba (RW)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upperflower price in fils per kg.
Apple 700/500
Banana 600/600
Banana (mulkhammar) 520/520
Banana (imported) 760/500
Cabbage 120/70
Carrot 280/140
Cauliflower 380/180
Cucumber (large) 150/90
Cucumber (small) 260/150
Eggplant 240/150
Garlic 700/450
Grapes 530/350
Guava 700/350
Lemon 350/250
Marrow (large) 280/150
Marrow (small) 350/220
Mulukhiyah 160/70
Onion (dry) 150/70
Okra 1050/700
Pea 620/400
Pepper (hot) 340/220
Pepper (sweet) 350/280
Plum 650/400
Pomegranate 380/250
Potato 340/280
Spinach 340/280
String Bean 700/400
Sweet melon 380/250
Tomato 220/120

Home News

Queen attends international meeting in Cairo

AMMAN (J.T.) — During a one-day trip to Cairo, HM Queen Noor, joined by Queen Sylvia of Sweden and Prince Henri of Luxembourg.

Wednesday attended a meeting of the Mentor Foundation's Board of Trustees dealing with drug abuse and other youth-related issues, hosted by HRH Prince Talal Ben Abdul Aziz Al Saud at the Arab Council for Childhood and Development (ACCD), a Royal Court statement said.

The Mentor Foundation, which was established by prominent international personalities in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) in May of 1994, supports and sustains the development of promising methods aimed at the reduction of substance abuse and related issues concerning youth.

Jordan's central geographical location makes it an obvious transit area between drug producing and drug using countries; moreover, hashish, the production of which decreased significantly during the last few years, is now being replaced with heroin its origin generally acknowledged as Turkey.

The statement said that the Queen verified that Jordan is working on strengthening regional cooperation in combating drug production and smuggling as part of the Arab Treaty and Strategy for Drug Prevention (ATSDP) and is searching for ways to develop meaningful cooperation with the Turkish authorities in particular.

The Queen said that drug abuse should be considered a fundamental develop-

ment challenge as it often bespeaks deeper issues of poverty and other social pressures affecting the family. She stressed the importance of cooperation between concerned non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the government to maximise the impact of substance abuse prevention efforts.

The statement confirmed that she plans to mobilise the resources of the Nnor Al Hussein Foundation, in cooperation with other development organisations to strengthen and expand drug prevention programmes in the Kingdom particularly in schools and through the media. In addition, the statement maintained, the National Task Force for Children (NTFC) will coordinate and collaborate with existing institutions in the field of child welfare to promote drug prevention programmes, especially in the educational curriculum of public and private schools, through the National Coalition for Children (NCC).

Prince Talal, who is the Chairman of the ACCD, said that it is "incumbent on all countries both in the Northern and Southern hemispheres, whether at the individual or governmental levels or at the level of international, regional or non-governmental organisations, to intensify their efforts and find more channels of coordination and communication to help children and youth wherever they may be without any discrimination as to their religion, gender or ethnic affiliation."

Queen Noor and Prince Talal will also be looking

into ways of expanding projects in the Middle East, the statement said.

The Mentor Foundation works in collaboration with organisations involved in the prevention of substance abuse at the grassroots level. It also operates through an active global network that includes both prevention centres and researchers to replicate and disseminate scientifically proven methodologies. By disseminating the latest findings directly to the community level and by applying these findings to specific prevention activities worldwide, Mentor aims to shift social attitudes towards prevention of substance abuse. Last year, Mentor initiated broad-based prevention programmes in South Africa and Central and Eastern Europe as well as funding the development and publication of educational materials on prevention. It is currently focusing much of its efforts on the expansion of WHO's global prevention project involving street children in 32 different cities in 25 countries.

According to the statement, Mentor's Youth Advisory Group (YAG), is comprised of 10 delegates with an age range of 15-19 years and was established to strengthen links between Mentor and its target population and give insight into the attitudes, beliefs and values of children and adolescents. In preparation for their role as members of YAG, the delegates attended a week-long orientation meeting in the United Kingdom. The orientation was conducted in the form

of workshops and information sessions, where the delegates were introduced to key issues in the area of prevention. The group also participated in an animation workshop, producing two thirty-second cartoons on the subject of substance abuse, and shared information about substance abuse trends in their respective communities. Queen Noor sponsored Rawan Tarawneh, a student at the Jubilee School and a member of the Human Rights and Environmental Protection Associations, to represent Jordan on YAG and they will discuss ways to develop a national Youth Advisory Group in Jordan, the statement said, continuing that the production and commercialisation of mind-altering and dependence-creating substances is estimated to constitute the second largest component in global economic activity, surpassing even the international oil trade.

While no adequate data has yet been compiled, according to Public Security Department estimates, there has been a 64 per cent increase in the number of drug-related cases in Jordan between 1993 and 1995 as well as a further increase of 41.1 per cent in the number of individuals apprehended in drug-related cases between 1993 and 1995.

According to the statement, later that evening the Queen and members of the Mentor Board of Trustees joined Susan Mubarak at a dinner hosted by Prince Talal Al Saud.

Minister maintains ground covered for Euro-Jordanian partnership

AMMAN (Petra)—Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb Wednesday said that Jordan is ready to forge a partnership with Europe in order to further its markets and trade to the outside world.

In an address to a workshop organised to discuss Jordanian European partnership and its impacts, delivered on his behalf by Assistant Secretary General of the Ministry of Industry and Trade Mohammad Bani Hani, Abul Ragheb said that Jordan has always been culturally, economically and politically linked to Europe, adding that the

partnership agreement, expected to be ratified by the end of this year would be a renewal of this relationship.

"By opening our markets and liberating our economy and trade we face a major challenge but we seek to not fear change and do not wish to remain in isolation," said the minister.

In his speech, Dr Bani Hani said that Jordan and Europe have covered most of the ground needed for the future association.

The meeting was organised by the Jordanian Exports Development and Commercial Centres Cor-

poration (JEDCO) and was held in conjunction with the UN Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme and the Italian government.

Director of the UNDP's Programmes Muntaser Oklah informed the meeting that his office was providing foreign expertise to the Jordanian private and public sector to help them achieve the desired partnership.

The partnership offers Jordan the opportunity for opening new markets for its products in the European continent, he said.

Italy's representative Raphaeli Benedictis confirmed that Italy supports Jordanian endeavours to enter into association with Europe. He called for further investments in Jordan to help the country create new jobs for the unemployed.

Several reports concerning the partnership were reviewed by the participants, one of which tackled Jordanian agricultural exports to Europe and another discussed protection of property rights and their effect on the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry.

Security centre for the Arab World discussed

AMMAN (Petra)—Minister of Interior Awad Khleifat Wednesday called for strengthening inter-Arab security cooperation through support of the Riyadh-based Arab Centre for Security Studies and Training.

Speaking at a meeting in his office with Director Abdul Aziz Ghamidi, Dr. Khleifat said that Arab governments must give due attention to such issues as drugs, crimes of all kinds and that these issues require more studies and research programmes.

The minister praised the centre for its continual efforts and expressed Jordan's readiness to collaborate and provide the Riyadh centre with technical and scientific expertise and further stated that the Kingdom welcomes any plans to bold security-related seminars in Amman.

Dr. Ghamidi presented a briefing on the centre's operations and outlined activities and plans for the next few years saying that the centre has been conducting field studies and research work on security affairs directed to Arab countries.

Later Dr. Ghamidi met Director of the Public Security Department Lieutenant General Nasouh Muhieddin and discussed cooperation in security affairs between Jordan and the Riyadh centre.

Muhieddin stated that his department would gather experiential information to be used by the Riyadh centre for the benefit of security services in the Arab world.

Princess speaks of global change in conference

AMMAN (J.T.) — "The International Conference on Women held in Beijing last year constituted a significant turning point in defining the role of women around the world in general and in the Arab countries in particular as it marked a clear break between the present century with all of its challenges and achievements and the coming century with its expectations of changes in concepts and trends," HRH Princess Basma said Wednesday.

She continued to say that "the world is witnessing a change in its power centres and stances. It is losing hold of the issues behind these dilemmas and is not effectively managing nor controlling their dispersion; therefore it is imperative upon all countries to re-examine their priorities and methods for dealing with new situations."

She was addressing the opening session of a three-day pan Arab meeting attended by women affairs specialists from various Arab governments and various international non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

"Today's meeting marks the real beginning of a new phase of collective work aimed at raising the position of Arab women. It crowns the work of the previous pan-Arab meetings which paved the way to the Beijing conference," said Princess Basma.

She said that she hoped that this constructive spirit would dominate the delegates' meetings to better create an objective, realistic, feasible working plan outlining the concerns of Arab women today.

The Princess stated Jordan's appreciation of the Arab League, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Ministry of Social Development, and the Jordanian National Committee for Women for their collective efforts in preparation for the conference.

Assistant Secretary General of the Arab League Ahmad Qadri notified the audience that the pan-Arab meeting has three main objectives: to help achieve gender equality in duties and rights, enhance women's participation in critical arenas and promoting women in economic, social, legal and political sectors.

Minister of Social Development Hamad Abu Jamous requested that Arab governments give due attention to the status of women in their strug-

gle against poverty and other such issues and take action to end injustice against women.

Njouad Fawzi, member of the Jordanian National Committee for Women, outlined a general plan on which Arab NGOs might begin implementation by the year 2000.

She stressed that poverty remains the main obstacle to improving the status of women, that 70 per cent of those who are defined as indigent in the Third World are female and that the majority victimised in armed conflicts are women and children.

She recommended that the conference endorse proposals passed by delegates of the 13 Arab nations participating in the Amman conference this week.

These recommendations, Ms. Fawzi explained, focus on poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and also on the creation of a special fund to finance NGO activities directed to women.

A summation of the conference will be submitted to the ministers of social development in their two-day meetings beginning Sept. 28 in Amman.

Queen receives gold medal from the Spanish architect's union

AMMAN (J.T.) — According to a Royal Court statement, the Dean-President of the Official College of Architects of Madrid (OCAM) Mr. Luis del Rey Wednesday presented Her Majesty Noor with a Gold Medal and an Honorary Membership of the College "in recognition of the arduous and protracted efforts you have carried out in defence of the essential values of architecture and your special concern for the underprivileged." Mr. del Rey said that OCAM, which relegates parts of its annual income to finance charitable organisations outside Spain, will donate 7 million pesetas to help fund the construction of the new campus of the Jubilee School.

The Queen said that "in Jordan, while our archaeological treasures are protected by various laws, we still lack a comprehensive and effective national strategy for the conservation of architectural heritage, reinforced by community awareness, public policy, technology and private sector endeavours." She added that the protection of buildings which form part of our historical and cultural national heritage still depends on the priorities of individual public officials and the efforts and activism



Her Majesty Queen Noor on Wednesday accepts a gold medal and a certificate of honorary membership in the Official College of Architects of Madrid from the organisation's dean president, Luis del Rey (Petra photo)

of concerned citizens and non-governmental organisations."

The Queen and Mr. del Rey later discussed the allocation of scholarships for Jordanian students who wish to study architecture in Spain, the statement said.

The Queen, who has a B.A. in Architecture and Urban Planning from Princeton University and participated in several international urban planning and design projects before her marriage, successfully lobbied the government to develop Jordan's first professional building code shortly after her marriage. In 1980, she formed a National Committee for Public Buildings and

Architectural Heritage to research, record, preserve and rehabilitate historic buildings, as well as to raise the standard of modern architecture, to promote the study of Arab Islamic and ancient architecture and regional influences on Jordanian architecture.

Her development efforts have emphasised the integration of architectural conservation with sustainable tourism and development at Jordan's archaeological sites as well as revitalising the country's historic villages and towns. She established an ad hoc architectural "watchdog" committee to monitor public building projects especially in key areas vulnerable to

rapid and uncontrolled touristic development plans, and has developed a set of architectural guidelines and recommendations for public buildings to safeguard the cultural and environmental integrity of the sites.

OCAM, which was founded in 1929 and currently has 6,500 members, aims to defend and protect the social function of architecture, to strengthen its commitment to raising the standard of living conditions, and to "represent a spirit of permanent service to the citizens of the world." OCAM, according to Spanish Law, also functions as the country's architects' union and has the sole authority to issue work permits and to monitor the private sector's construction projects.

HM King Hussein's Cultural Secretary HRH Prince Ghazi Bin Mohammed, Minister of Public Works and Housing Mr. Abdul Hadi Majali, Mayor of Amman Dr. Mamdouh Ahadi, Executive Director of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation Dr. Ibrahim Badran and members of the Jordanian Architects Association and the National Committee for Public Buildings and Architectural Heritage attended the ceremony with Queen Noor.

FILM

* "Kamal Boullata" at Darat Al Fumm, Jabal Weibdeh, on Thursday at 6:00 p.m.

CONCERT

* Performance of popular heritage by Jaffa Society for Social Development at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Plastic art by Iraqi artist Widad Ayal at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Sept. 26.

* Works by Mohammad Al Jalous entitled "Paffette" at Baladna Art Gallery, at Garden Street (Tel. 687598), until Oct. 3.

Works by Shereen Odeh at the Jordan Plastic Art Association

Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 621297), until Oct. 1.

* Basketry exhibition (with a variety of wrought iron furniture mixed with basketry) at Jordan Design and Trade Centre, Shamsan (Tel. 69144/2), until Oct. 10.

* Water colours works by Salam Kanaan and Pia Hayes at Alia Art Gallery, Jabal Amman (Tel. 639303), until Sept. 26.

* "Summer '96" exhibition at Darat Al Fumm, Jabal Weibdeh (including ceramic sculptures by Vera Tammari, photographs of Jordanian villages by Ammar Khammash, works by contemporary Arab artists, a mosaic exhibition, and others), until Oct. 8.

GALA DINNER

* Gala dinner at the Amman Citadel on Friday at 8:00 p.m. (Evening activities highlighted by guitarist and singer Beshar Husam and his band).

Yeltsin heart operation to take place in 6 to 10 weeks

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin's heart bypass surgery will take place in Moscow in six to 10 weeks' time when the chances of success should be almost 100 per cent, top doctors announced Wednesday.

"The operation will be done in six to 10 weeks' time," the head Kremlin doctor, Sergei Mironov, told a press conference.

The decision to delay the operation, originally announced for the end of September, was taken at a three-hour meeting of Mr. Yeltsin's doctors at the Central Clinical Hospital, where the president is undergoing tests.

Pioneering U.S. cardiologist Michael DeBakey, who will attend the operation, said that six weeks to two months would be needed for Mr. Yeltsin to recover after which he should return "to normal working condition."

The delay and convalescence period will keep Mr. Yeltsin away from a full workload for the rest of this year and possibly well into 1997.

Surgeon Renat Akhurin, who will lead the surgical team, told the press conference that "if the chances for success are 80 per cent now, then in six weeks they will be close to 100 per cent."

Dr. Mironov said the delay will be used for further tests during which Mr. Yeltsin, 65, will "remain under the strict surveillance of doctors, preferably in hospital or at the rest home."

Dr. Mironov said the number of bypasses to Mr. Yeltsin's heart would be decided during the operation, but that there would be a maximum of four. Interfax

News Agency reported. The operation is to last about 90 minutes, he said.

Dr. DeBakey said Mr. Yeltsin's liver and kidneys were in relatively good condition, but that there was an unexplained blood loss and it was necessary to decide whether or not to give the president a blood transfusion.

Mr. Yeltsin suffers from ischaemia, a condition blocking the blood flow to the heart. Although bypasses are now almost a routine procedure, Mr. Yeltsin's case is complicated by other illnesses, doctors have said.

The operation will now take place between early November and mid-December.

Doctors have said in the Russian press that Mr. Yeltsin, who had two heart attacks last year and another between June 16 and July 3 this year, during the presidential elections, will probably need two to three months to recover from the bypass.

That could keep him away from his usual workload until March.

Despite the medical risks, the operation has become a political necessity if Mr. Yeltsin, reelected for a second, four-year term only in July, is to hold on to power.

The Communist opposition has called for Mr. Yeltsin to resign if he cannot carry out all his duties as head of state.

If he does not have the surgery, Mr. Yeltsin's workload will be drastically reduced — an option that Mr. Yeltsin himself has already ruled out.

Communist chief Genady Zyuganov, who was defeated by Mr. Yeltsin in the presidential elections,

said Tuesday that if Mr. Yeltsin was not fit, "we must consider holding presidential elections in three months."

"An immense country such as ours needs to be led," Mr. Zyuganov said. "The question of the president's health is a question of security not only within Russia, but on the international level."

Under the constitution, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin would become acting president if Mr. Yeltsin died, became incapacitated or stepped down, with new elections held in three months.

Mr. Chernomyrdin Tuesday ruled out Mr. Yeltsin stepping down, saying: "There cannot even be a suggestion of this now."

The liberal Sevodnya daily newspaper wrote Wednesday that Mr. Yeltsin had no choice.

"Even if the patient Yeltsin does not need an operation, President Yeltsin needs to be operated on. If this does not take place, there will be a major scandal," it said.

During the period of the operation itself, the controls of Russia's vast nuclear arsenal and other presidential powers will be handed over to Mr. Chernomyrdin.

In addition to Dr. DeBakey, who carried out the world's first bypass operation in 1964, German doctors are acting as advisors. It is not clear whether German surgeons will come to Moscow, but Dr. Akhurin is planning to go to a clinic in Germany after the medical meeting for consultations with colleagues. Interfax quoted sources as saying Wednesday.



Greek Premier Costas Simitis (centre), waves to photographers as he stands in front of his new cabinet after a swearing in ceremony at the Presidency Wednesday. Mr. Simitis' Socialist Party won the national elections last Sunday (Renter photo)

Greece's new Socialist government gets to work

ATHENS (R) — Greece's socialist government, mixing experienced ministers with younger reformers, will face tough challenges on the economy and foreign policy after being sworn in Wednesday by President Costas Stephanopoulos.

Prime Minister Costas Simitis, who scored a solid election win Sunday, hand-picked his cabinet, rejecting efforts by some ministers to bargain over positions.

Mr. Simitis, 60, disappointed some by shying from the radical cabinet changes he once hinted at. He opted instead to keep on old-guard Socialists and mix them with young reformers who helped put him in power.

A dry technocrat who trained in Germany and Britain as an economist, he took over from late party founder and three-time

Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu in January.

His gamble to call an early election paid off and set his seal of authority on the Socialist Party and the government.

The cabinet, where the only major change was the removal of Gerassimos Arsenis from the Defence Ministry, sent a message of stability and continuity to markets.

The cabinet, sworn in by Mr. Stephanopoulos, includes just one new face as a full minister and mostly moves members of the old Papandreu guard.

Mr. Simitis gave the Defence Ministry to Akis Tsohatzopoulos, his opponent in the tough leadership battles that followed the death of Papandreu in June.

He kept his economic team intact, keeping Deve-

lopment Minister Vasso Papandreu and giving National Economy Minister Yannis Papandoniou the Finance Ministry as well.

The most radical reform was to send former Finance Minister Alexandros Papadopoulos to the Interior Ministry where he will try to bring public sector administration under control. He has already vowed to hire only one person for every three who leave.

Mr. Simitis renamed Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos, who has won respect for his skills but raised eyebrows for occasional blunt criticism of some EU partners.

Mr. Pangalos' major challenge will be over relations with Turkey and efforts by the United States to lessen tensions between the two NATO states in the Aegean and over Cyprus.

Washington sent a message to Greece Tuesday, saying it hoped to lead a new effort to resolve Greek-Turkish tensions.

The State Department said U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher passed the message to Mr. Pangalos at a meeting in New York, where both are attending the U.N. General Assembly.

"Secretary Christopher said he thought that it was important for the United States to help lead a new effort to resolve some of the Aegean problems between Greece and Turkey," a State Department official said.

Greece has refused to negotiate with Ankara over a variety of disputes, saying the right place to settle such matters was the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

Lebed resigns Duma seat

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian Security Council Secretary Alexander Lebed has resigned his mandate to the lower house of parliament as a result of his appointment as national security chief. ITAR-TASS news agency reported Wednesday.

The agency quoted the presidency of the State Duma as saying Gen. Lebed had resigned as deputy for the constituency of Tula, south of Moscow, where a by-election will now have to be held.

Under Russian law, members of parliament are forbidden from undertaking any paid activity with the exception of teaching and research. Gen. Lebed was drawn into the salaried presidential administration as security chief in June.

His resignation could open the way for the former head of the presidential bodyguard, General Alexander Korzhakov, to launch a political career and stand for parliament.

Gen. Korzhakov has already expressed his desire to run for the constituency of Gen. Lebed, an erstwhile adversary whose accession to the Kremlin was immediately followed by Gen. Korzhakov's own dismissal from Mr. Yeltsin's inner circle.

But recently, the two generals have appeared closer politically. Gen. Lebed said he would support Gen. Korzhakov if he decided to stand in Tula, while Gen. Korzhakov told Moscow daily Kommorskaya Pravda Tuesday that Gen. Lebed was the natural successor to ailing President Boris Yeltsin.

Meanwhile, Gen. Lebed, in a characteristically dramatic interview Wednesday, said the government may drive the army to mutiny very soon by its negligence failure to pay wages.

"An armed mutiny may take place this autumn," Gen. Lebed told Vechernyaya Moskva daily newspaper. The publicity-seeking general, who makes no secret of his ambition to succeed President Yeltsin, has a record of controversial remarks.

His office confirmed to Reuters he had given the interview.

On Tuesday, Gen. Lebed's aides flatly denied he had given an interview to Britain's Daily Telegraph, in which he was quoted as saying Moscow would hit Germany and U.S. industrial interests if the NATO defence alliance admitted East European states.

The London newspaper stuck by its story.

In Vechernyaya Moskva (Evening Moscow), Gen. Lebed accused Mr. Chernomyrdin's government of "hiding its head in the sand" in underestimating tension in the armed forces and called the situation a "national disgrace."

"They have decided to conclusively undermine the armed forces and drown the defence minister," he said, apparently also referring to the government. He said soldiers were committing suicide in despair and even officers were ending up in hospital with malnutrition.

Coincidentally, the official Defence Ministry newspaper Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star) headlined its front page with an article on the rise in suicides among soldiers.

Gen. Lebed drew a historical parallel with the tsarist Russian army which, exhausted and demoralised in World War I, was unable to resist the Bolshevik uprising. "People with high professional skills serve in the army. Maybe it is not enough to win world wars but it is definitely enough to slaughter all the lambs," Gen. Lebed said.

Gen. Lebed wrote to Mr. Yeltsin late last month denouncing the government's 1997 budget for failing to provide for the army. An ambitious political novice, he appears to be jockeying for position, notably against Mr. Chernomyrdin, as the president lies in hospital awaiting major heart surgery.

Gen. Lebed told the Moscow newspaper he could salvage the situation in the country but did not have enough power.

"I have a plan but do not have powers to implement it because those are the powers of the head of state," he said.

He said an increasing trend to decentralise power — something Mr. Yeltsin himself has promoted — was a threat that could break up the Russian Federation in the same as the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Gen. Lebed also had more harsh words for the West, condemning the United States' missile attacks on Iraq this month and warning that if anyone who did the same to Russia: "I would hit back instantly. With everything we've got."

Clearly referring to Washington, he went on: "We have nothing to lose. We don't have a pain threshold. You can bang our head on the tarmac. But they do have something to lose. Let them think about that, gentlemen."

Tension grows in Armenia over contested vote

YEREVAN (R) — Elite commando troops took up positions around key buildings in the Armenian capital Yerevan as the country appeared headed for an acute political crisis over Sunday's presidential election.

More than 200 soldiers brandishing plastic riot shields and backed by a water cannon stood guard around president Levon Ter-Petrosyan's official residence.

The soldiers did not appear to have weapons, but reporters said a smaller group armed with Kalashnikov rifles were protecting the state television complex.

Mr. Ter-Petrosyan Monday proclaimed a "brilliant victory" in his quest for a second five-year term over former Prime Minister Vazgen Manukyan, but his margin has been shrinking as late votes are counted in a contest marred by irregularities.

Workers from the Central Electoral Commission suddenly left their offices located in the parliament building in mid-afternoon and a press briefing was cancelled.

Mr. Ter-Petrosyan has governed the rocky Caucasus state sandwiched between Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Iran since 1991 through a long-standing conflict with the Azeris over territory and economic hardship.

The commission head told Armenian government television that as of 1500 local time (1100 GMT) Mr. Ter-Petrosyan had 52.08 per cent of the vote to 41.26 for Mr. Manukyan. Mr. Ter-Petrosyan needs more than 50 per cent of the vote to avoid a second-round runoff.

A TV announcer gave similar figures which he said were final and congratulated Mr. Ter-Petrosyan on having won, but it was not possible to confirm them with the Electoral Commission.

Japanese Premier set to put final touches to election plan

TOKYO (R) — Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto will meet with senior members of Japan's ruling coalition Thursday to put together a final schedule for general elections expected in October, officials said Wednesday.

Hours after his return from a three-day trip to New York at midnight Wednesday, Mr. Hashimoto will hold a final round of talks Thursday with the leaders of the two junior parties in the coalition.

He is expected to tell them he has decided to dissolve the lower house of parliament Friday, when it convenes for an extraordinary parliamentary session, and call snap polls on Oct. 20, coalition officials said.

Under the constitution, the lower house can only be dissolved when parliament is in session and general elections must be held within 40 days of its dissolution.

An election is not mandated until July 1997, but Mr. Hashimoto's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has been pushing for polls to be called well before an unpopular sales tax is raised from three per cent to five per cent next April.

The smaller coalition parties, New Party Sakigake

and the Social Democratic Party, are threatened by mass defections and do not want to go before the voters at least until they settle a bitter row over how to regroup themselves.

The direct threat comes from the New Democratic Party, being formed mainly of rebels from the two parties themselves.

Sakigake is a splinter group of the conservative LDP and the Social Democrats are the renamed Socialist Party.

Although the LDP is expected to get the most votes in an election, no single party is likely to capture a majority in the 500-seat lower house.

This means the LDP could be forced to form another coalition with one or more of its political rivals.

The main opposition Shinshinto (New Frontier Party) is projected to finish second with around 200 lower house seats.

Many analysts and politicians believe the LDP is most likely to forge an alliance with the Democratic Party, which is expected to hold a swing vote with scores of lower house seats.

Except for the planned rise in the sales tax, there are few major policy issues

facing the country.

With Shinshinto vowing to take advantage of voter anger over the tax policy formulated by the Hashimoto government, the LDP is mulling freezing the sales tax rise for at least a year.

"Although the cabinet has decided to raise the consumption tax, we must not implement it in April while the economy remains sluggish," Shizuka Kamei, a senior LDP legislator, told a seminar Tuesday.

Japan's economy is recovering from a slump that followed the bursting of an asset "bubble" in the early 1990s, but analysts and government experts agree it remains fragile and could be seriously set back by a rise in the sales tax.

Mr. Hashimoto is Japan's fourth prime minister since the last general elections in 1993, when the pro-business LDP lost its grip on power for the first time in 38 years.

The polls will be the first under a system designed to make campaigning less costly and reduce graft. In place of a multi-seat system, 300 seats will be decided on a first-past-the-post basis and the other 200 by proportional representation.

Major's appeal for unity falls on deaf ears

LONDON (R) — Divisions over Europe within Britain's Conservative Party yawned as wide as ever Wednesday despite attempts by Prime Minister John Major to lay down the law on his wait-and-see policy towards a single currency.

Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine warned so-called Eurosceptics and pro-Europeans that their squabbling could cost the party victory at the next election, due by next May.

"What they're doing is creating an impression of disunity, the only consequence of which can be to put into power a Labour government," Mr. Heseltine told BBC Radio. Labour leads the ruling party in opinion polls by about 20 points.

He was speaking soon after John Redwood, a leading Euro-sceptic opposed to closer European ties, challenged Mr. Major's ruling that the government would keep its options open on whether to join the European Union's planned single currency.

Mr. Redwood, who quit the cabinet in a failed bid to oust Mr. Major from the

Conservative Party leadership in July 1995, said events this week had shown that the wait-and-see approach was dangerous.

Mr. Major tried to defuse a row sparked when Finance Minister Kenneth Clarke said Sunday it would be "pathetic" if Britain were to rule out initial participation in the single currency, due to be launched in 1999, only to join later.

Mr. Clarke, the cabinet's leading pro-European, was accused by junior Foreign Minister Sir Nicholas Bonsor, a Euro-sceptic, of going beyond the government's agreed line.

But Mr. Major told reporters late Tuesday that Mr. Clarke had been misrepresented in the press and that the turmoil, in effect, was all one big misunderstanding.

In clear defiance of Mr. Major, Mr. Redwood returned to the attack Wednesday. He insisted that Mr. Clarke had stepped out of line by expressing a clear preference for Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and said it was worrying that he had done so.

Singaporean fined \$43,000 for Internet smut

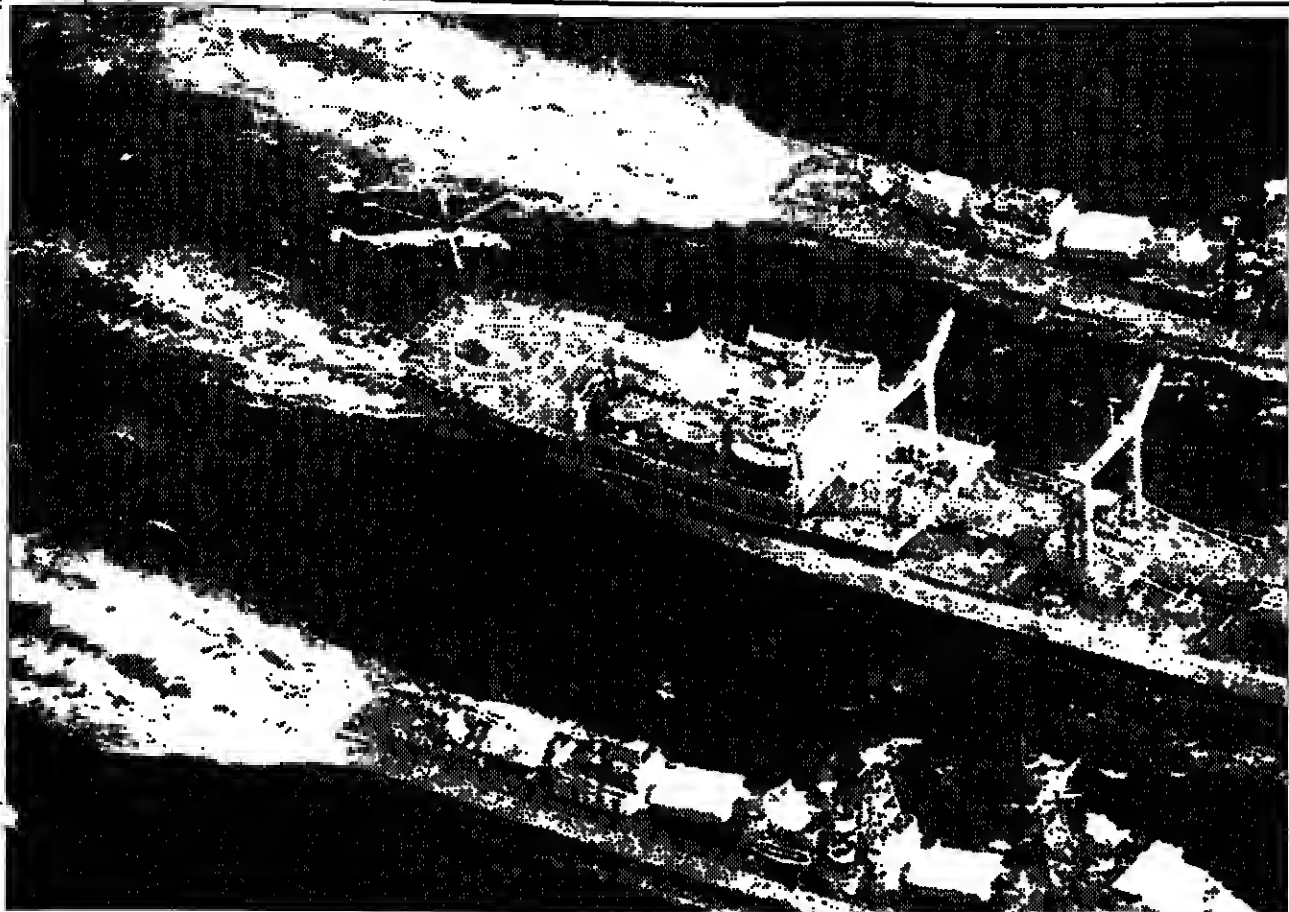
SINGAPORE (R) — Singapore man has been fined 61,000 Singapore dollars (\$43,000) for downloading sex film from the Internet, the first such case in a country embarking on censorship of the Net, the Straits Times said Wednesday. The newspaper said Lai Chee Chuan, 41, was fined 1,000 Singapore dollars each for 61 obscene films he said he had downloaded from the Internet for his own use. He was also fined 500 Singapore dollars for possessing a magazine — Penthouse, deemed obscene in Singapore — found by police when they raided Mr. Lai's flat. The newspaper quoted police as saying the raid followed a tip-off from Interpol that it was investigating a group of people exchanging pornography on the Internet and a Singapore site had been identified. It said other sites were in South Africa, Hong Kong, Britain, Canada and Germany, but gave no further details. The newspaper did not say whether Mr. Lai's computer was one of the sites.

Former Indian royal courtesans live in poverty

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Former courtesans from one of India's most famous royal harems are poor living in abject poverty, a daily newspaper said. The Times of India said four women, now in their eighties and once members of a harem run for the erstwhile rulers of Jaipur state, were being given a monthly pension of 100 rupees (\$2.8) by the state government of Rajasthan. The four are paid an additional 400 rupees (\$11.5) by Bawani Singh, the present Maharajah of Jaipur who is currently India's ambassador to Brunei. Their total earnings would fetch one meal at a decent restaurant. The former principality of Jaipur was renowned for its wealth and high-living. The dowager Princess Gayatri Devi was reputed to be one of the 10 most beautiful women in her prime and counted British and continental royalty as her closest friends. The Jaipur harem had about 100 courtesans who lived in gilded splendour but in seclusion. Guarded by eunuchs, they led wildly extravagant lifestyles. Royalty was abolished in India in the 1960s but the Jaipur family still attracts media attention in India and overseas, especially in magazines like the Tatler, Paris-Match and Hola. The family is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records for staging the world's most expensive wedding, for owning the largest silver vessels and for winning an election with the highest majority.

Japanese fighting dog mauls owner to death

TOKYO (AFP) — A large Japanese fighting dog mauled his 64-year-old owner to death Wednesday in the western Japanese city of Kochi, a police spokesman said. Yoshitada Uemori was already dead from blood loss when police, alerted by a local resident, found him lying in the street early Wednesday, a police spokesman said. When police officers got to the site, the two-and-a-half-year old male tosa dog, weighing 80 kilograms, was looking aggressive as it stood by Uemori's body. "So a policeman shot the dog in the head," the spokesman said. Press reports said Uemori was walking the dog on a leash when it suddenly attacked him, biting his head and neck.



A Chinese People's Liberation Army helicopter lands on a supply ship flanked by two Jianghu Class frigates and followed by another Jiangwei Class frigate during a military exercise in the East China Sea on Sept. 18. China urged Japan to be rational and not to provoke any new incidents in a row over a group of disputed islands, known as the Diaoyus in Chinese and the Senkakus in Japanese, in the East China Sea (Reuter photo)

Rebels blast truck; Sri Lankan troops open new front

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tamil Tiger guerrillas blew up an army truck and killed 15 soldiers in northern Sri Lanka Wednesday, as government forces opened a new major front in their battle against the rebels, officials said.

The latest Tiger mine attack took the official death toll to 262 in fresh violence since thousands of government soldiers launched a drive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) Sunday.

The Tiger attack on the army truck at Kaithadi in the northern peninsula of Jaffna came as troops fought the guerrillas in a new flank in the adjoining district of Kilinochchi, officials said.

Troops broke out of their western defences of the small town of Paranthan in

the district of Kilinochchi Wednesday as another column in the opposite direction consolidated their gains, military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said.

He said 22 soldiers and an estimated 75 rebels were killed in the latest fighting adding to the previous death toll of 150 — 95 rebels, 47 troops and eight civilians.

Military figures show that nearly 100 troops have been wounded and estimate rebel casualties at over 200 wounded.

"Most of the army casualties are due to mortar bomb attacks," Brig. Munasinghe said adding that the security forces too were using intense air and artillery attacks to pound rebel positions in the sparsely populated area.

A curfew had been imposed but there were hardly

any civilians in the areas where the fighting was taking place. Brig. Munasinghe said adding that the few civilians had been warned to get to safer locations.

Brig. Munasinghe said troops had advanced seven kilometres along the new front amid intense resistance from the LTTE.

Along the military's south eastern flank, troops Tuesday captured the rebel-held village of Murasumottai and were now concentrating in the opposite direction. Brig. Munasinghe said.

"Our main aim is to kill as many terrorists as possible," Brig. Munasinghe told reporters here, adding that troops were now in the process of building new defences at Murasumottai.

The navy and the air force were also inducted in the latest ground offensive to

provide cover to infantry troops. Brig. Munasinghe said.

The village of Murasumottai was the launching pad for rebel attacks against the army's strategic but small town of Paranthan, just north of the Tiger's political base of Kilinochchi.

For its part, the Tigers said the latest military action was aimed at taking the larger town of Kilinochchi which the security forces failed to capture last month due to intense rebel resistance.

The LTTE said over its clandestine radio, the Voice of Tigers that security forces killed at least five civilians and wounded several others during the ongoing offensive.

China calls for military might to guard territory

BEIJING (R) — China, embroiled in a row with Japan over a group of disputed islands in the East China Sea, Wednesday called for a mustering of sufficient military might to defend its national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The official China Daily newspaper said combat readiness among the people should be boosted, but diplomats said the rallying call was aimed more at strengthening political control over the armed forces than at warning off Tokyo.

"We must ensure that we have sufficient force to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," the newspaper quoted Major-General Dai Yifang of the People's Liberation Army's Academy of Military Sciences as saying.

"We must be ready for any possible invasion, pool all social resources, and mobilise all resources to unite the entire country," it said in a front-page report flanked by a photograph of naval vessels carrying out exercises

in the East China Sea.

The photograph was dated Sept. 18, anniversary of the start of Japan's 1931 invasion of northeastern China and one of the most sensitive dates in a Sino-Japanese diplomatic calendar strewn with bitter reminders of past conflict.

Relations between Beijing and Tokyo have been rocked in recent months by a flaring dispute over the ownership of a group of uninhabited islands in the East China Sea known as the Diaoyus in Chinese and the Senkakus in Japan.

The dispute, fuelled by the construction by rightwing Japanese of a lighthouse on one of the islands, has united Beijing with rival Taiwan in condemnation of Tokyo's control over the potentially resource-rich group.

China Tuesday told Japan not to provoke any new incidents in the island row, but diplomats said China Daily's Paean to Beijing's policy of "active defence" did not appear intended as a diplomatic shot across Tokyo's bows.

yo's bows.

"It's another little push (to stress) that politics rule the military," said one Beijing-based Western diplomat. "I don't think its directly connected with the islands."

The underlying theme has been that the Chinese have been trying to keep the Diaoyu/Senkaku business quite low key," the diplomat said. "It's the Taiwanese and people in Hong Kong that are causing them (the Chinese) problems."

Japanese patrol vessels Monday repulsed Hong Kong and Taiwanese activists trying to force a landing on the Diaoyus, but more nationalist campaigners are already en-route for further confrontations in the waters around the islands.

The dispute has forced Beijing to walk a tightrope between maintaining its nationalist credentials and averting diplomatic crisis with a vital economic partner.

The China Daily article, which was peppered with references to late Chairman

Mao Zedong's theory of "people's war", was a product of continuing campaigns to stress the Communist Party's control of the army, another Beijing-based diplomat said.

"It is a bit of a throwback to an earlier ideological era," the diplomat said. "The mood in the military has been pretty conservative in recent months... there has been a renewed emphasis on ideological and political education."

China Daily said the new high-technology People's Liberation Army still paid special attention to Mao's military thinking, developed during the Communist Party's successful war against its nationalist rivals and in its resistance against Japan.

One diplomat said the theory would be of little use in a naval confrontation.

"It's not a people's war when you go to sea, because you miss people at sea," he said. "You've got to fight with what you've got."

Taiwan reluctant to defend island protest boat

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan said Wednesday it would not protect a Hong Kong protest ship steaming toward an East China Sea archipelago to challenge Japan's claim of sovereignty, but restated its resolve to defend its own claim to the isles.

Taiwan's seagoing forces would not come to the aid of the Kien Hwa 2 unless the ship was stricken in international waters and requested humanitarian assistance, Defence Minister Chiang Chung-Ling told lawmakers.

The ship left Hong Kong Sunday with 18 anti-Japan activists, 19 crew and 42

reporters, with protest leaders pledging to go ashore on the islands and remove Japanese flags and a lighthouse built in July by Japanese ultra-nationalists.

The ship was expected early Thursday to reach the uninhabited islands claimed by Japan as the Senkakus and Taiwan and China as the Diaoyus.

Japanese patrol boats Monday repulsed a similar protest effort by a flotilla of private Taiwan boats.

Chiang's reluctance to defend the Kien Hwa 2 arises, partly because it is flying the flag of Communist China, Taiwan's rival

since a civil war split them in 1949.

"We will not protect ships carrying Communist China's five-star flag," Mr. Chiang said when pressed to say whether Taiwan would defend ships challenging Japan's claim of sovereignty.

"If accidents happen in international waters and they require humanitarian assistance, only then will we consider action," Mr. Chiang said in Taipei.

Mr. Chiang nevertheless reiterated Taiwan's resolve to defend its claim to the uninhabited islands, which are also claimed by rival Beijing, but only as a last

resort.

"I agree with you that we will not rule out going to war," Mr. Chiang told a parliamentary committee when pressed about Taiwan's willingness to defend its claim by force.

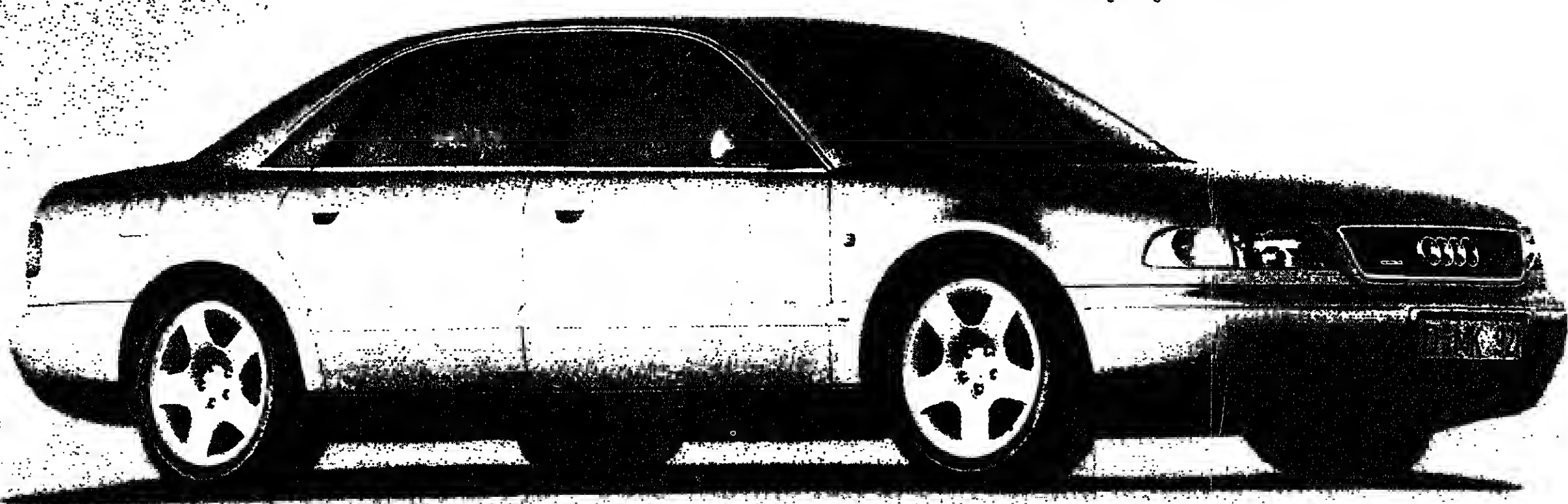
"But have you thought about the consequences of war and whether war would solve any problems?" he said.

"War is not a three-year-old child's play but involves vital national interests," he said. "We cannot go to war just so that everyone can feel good."

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Alarming development

THE ISRAELI prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and his ultra-rightist colleagues in the Israeli government are playing with fire. The reaction to their decision to open a controversial tunnel under the holy sites of the city of Jerusalem manifested itself in violent clashes yesterday between the Israeli police and the Palestinian people, including Palestinian police, in the streets of Palestinian cities and towns throughout the West Bank.

As if his statements on the issues of peace in the region and his pronouncement on the Golan Heights, on the future of Jerusalem and on Palestinian rights are not enough, Netanyahu is now playing with the sentiments of Arabs, Muslims and Christians by opening a tunnel that all previous Israeli governments avoided opening. Whether under pressure from his ultra-orthodox coalition partners or through sheer personal conviction, the Israeli prime minister is contributing to escalating tension in the region that so far has reached alarming levels.

Netanyahu has, since his election in May, managed to put the region on a new course, that of cold war. He now seems to be pushing the Middle East back to the days of confrontations and war.

He has already alienated not only those who had engaged the previous Labour government in a meaningful and serious quest for peace, i.e. Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians, but also those who are in peace with the Jewish state, i.e. Egypt and Jordan. Also dismayed by Netanyahu's statements and actions are all the other Arab countries that only two years ago had hoped that the region was really heading for peace and tranquillity.

The clashes between Israeli and Palestinian police yesterday are an ominous sign of the shape of things to come.

The Israeli government knew all along that going through the project of digging a dangerous and controversial tunnel that was first attempted in 1981 would stir trouble on unprecedented scale. If the former Likud-led government under Yitzhak Shamir had decided to shelve the project out of semblance of respect for the sensitivity of the Muslim World, why would Netanyahu embark on it now except to tell the Arab World and the international community that he is even more extremist and hard-nosed than his Likud predecessors? If we paint a comprehensive picture of the thinking and deeds of Netanyahu on peace talks with the Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese since he assumed power and add to it his utter disregard to the sentiments of the Arab and Muslim World, we come up with a very disturbing portrait that spells doom and gloom to the peoples of the Middle East as a whole, Jews included.

What seems to be required at the moment is for the Israeli leader to pause and consider that the volatile situation that now prevails in the region was triggered by his election and the actions that his government has taken so far. It is up to him to continue undermining the peace process or reverse direction and follow on the foot-steps of his more sober and wiser predecessors.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE UPROAR raised by Arab countries in their media, condemning Israel's current stand with regard to the peace process, can by no means serve any cause if the words are not backed by action, said a writer for Al Ra'i daily Wednesday. The Israelis have gone back on pledges made by their former government concerning the redeployment in Hebron and other parts of Palestine, they continually declare they will not pull out from Lebanese and Syrian territories and they insist on depriving the Palestinians of the right to a state of their own in Palestine; and above all, they are going ahead with measures to erase Arab and Islamic traces in Jerusalem, said Ibrahim Al Absi. Relying on continued U.S. support and sheer military power, the Israelis are disregarding all calls for complying with the requirements of peace and are determined to ruin the peace process in which they see an end to their dreams of expansion, continued the writer. In the face of this aggressive behaviour and in light of Israel's ongoing preparations for a possible armed conflict with the Arabs, said the writer, the Arab countries should not be content with mere statements of condemnation, they should take practical steps to fend off this danger by all means and through unified steps at the regional and international levels. The Arabs, said the writer, should act in concert and in a manner that would not only stop Israel's illegal practices but also deter it from taking further steps towards consolidating its occupation of Arab lands.

THE SABER-rattling heard on both sides of the fence between Israel and the Arabs and the daily escalation of tension could well end up in military confrontation, said a writer for Al Dustour Wednesday. Since the moment the Likud-led government came to power in Israel, the situation has been worsening, and the peace process has been disrupted and on the retreat, largely due to the Israeli government's position vis-à-vis the Arab rights, said Mohammad Kawash. Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has proved to be hesitant in all his actions, which clearly are taken under the influence of the religious parties in the government coalition, and he has proved incapable of moving one step further in the peace process, thus reflecting weakness and a subsequent stalemate in the peace talks, especially on the Palestinian track, added the writer of a coalition with the Labour Party that would be more inclined towards peace.

The View from Academia

The government, the opposition, the people and the need to be clear

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

THE MEETING between Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and members of the press on Monday (televised in part Tuesday night) is quite an important meeting. In it, the premier spoke fluently, succinctly and clearly on a number of crucial issues at the local, pan-Arab and international level — democracy, bread, exaggerated citizen reliance on government, the misconceived role of the opposition, inter-Arab relations, the peace process, etc. The premier's reading of the various issues, though brief, was deep, perceptive and quite compelling.

More important than the issues is perhaps the idea itself: facing the press and the media and, through them, the people.

Governments in general, it seems to me, must give a lot of justification and explanation for what they do or intend to do to keep the citizens informed about what is going on. It is true that actions speak louder than words, but it is equally true that the rationale and intention behind many actions need to be explained thoroughly.

In the more developed parts of the world, citizens are amply familiar with governmental policies because governments are elected on the basis of precise, clearcut and well-articulated and debated programmes of action (this is why you have campaigns, campaign managers, debates, etc.); because such governments make it a point upon election to inform, justify and explain; because the media and the press do a great deal of analysis of governmental policies and practices; because scholars, experts and research centres conduct daily, weekly, monthly and annual studies of government actions; and because the citizens of many developed countries actively seek out information about governmental policies and conduct.

In our part of the world, governmental programmes are not subjected to the degree of analysis, study, debate, explanation and exposure that you find in the more developed part of the globe. It is true that governments in our part of the world have to win the vote of confidence in Parliament, on the basis of a programme (which gets debated for no more than a couple of weeks), that govern-

ments themselves speak about their programmes (once in a while), that the media and the press devote some attention to governmental policies ("some" is important here), that some of our scholars, experts and research institutions study governmental actions and procedures, that some citizens actively seek to know, etc. However, all this happens at a very slow pace and in very limited and sporadic (perhaps even marginal) manner.

It is to the credit of the Kabariti government that it has a spokesman (the minister of information) who speaks consistently about governmental policies and opinions. Still, this is not enough, and most of the briefing and brainstorming is directed at journalists and not the people directly.

There is, due to past governmental practices and present realities of sorts, still a gap (nay, a vacuum, a chasm) separating the government and the people. In the absence of diligent, rigorous and aggressive efforts on the part of the government to reach out to the people, explain and justify its intentions, plans, programmes, rationale, logic and vision, the space which separates the government and the governed is occupied either by an opposition whose main aim is to distort the image of the government, discredit it, and maybe even bring it down or by nasty ambiguity, hearsay, rumour, guessing and harmful theorising of sorts.

The government, it seems to me, needs to come up with a mechanism through which it keeps in constant and direct contact with the people. I would suggest a monthly TV/radio speech, debate, encounter, etc., in which the prime minister (or a member of his cabinet) speaks directly about the hottest issues in the manner Mr. Kabariti spoke Monday.

I would argue, on the basis of what I have heard in the street, that the televised premier's encounter with the journalists has done more good to the government (and to the people) than months of talking to parliamentarians and journalists. It may be true that some of our citizens will never see eye to eye with the government, but many will, if they find the logic compelling and the argument con-

vincing, and if the are consulted forthrightly.

If the government comes up with such a mechanism (and it has to be on a regular, not random, basis), it will kill at least two birds with one stone.

A) It will prevent misunderstanding or distortion of its intentions, positions, programmes and plans, and thus win more popular confidence in them and more popular support for its programmes — especially since it appears to be serious in its resolve to carry out serious reforms and effect real changes.

B) More importantly perhaps, it shall place pressure on the opposition not only to be less distortive and subversive of governmental policies but to start crystallising a clear vision and well-defined and articulated alternatives to governmental policies, measures and plans which it constantly derides and makes fund of.

It has become obvious to many, I think, that the opposition in our part of the world is a largely cynical or subversive force, rather than being a viable option to government. Through reaching out to people more effectively and constantly, the government may force the opposition to redefine itself and play a more constructive role in the days ahead. The people benefit a great deal from a government which seeks to do things transparently, and from an opposition which intelligently and responsibly tries to offer viable alternative thought, policies, measures and programmes.

It is crucial for the government to speak out to the people directly (through the mechanism suggested above, or through any other mechanism it sees fit) and it is important for the opposition (through emulating the government, maybe) to articulate coherent, precise and constructive positions.

If the government speaks and articulates, and the opposition speaks and articulates, the citizen will be better informed and the country will be able to take better decisions. There is a genuine need for the articulation of positions.

The curse of the Bhuttos

By Gwynne Dyer

THE ONLY time I met

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto,

Pakistan's martyred prime

minister, he quoted

Shakespeare to me. But he

was the first of the Bhuttos

to die, bled by the usurping

dictator General Zia ul

Haq on trumped-up murder

charges in 1979, so he was

spared full knowledge of

what a bloody

Shakespearean tragedy his

own family's history would

become.

The latest and final

episode of the tragedy

began on September 20,

when the late prime minister's

son, Murtaza Bhutto,

was killed by eight police

bullets outside his home in

the wealthy Clifton Road

district of Karachi at the age

of 42.

Murtaza's sister Benazir

Bhutto, who has followed in

their father's footsteps to

become prime minister of

Pakistan, sat barefoot and

disconsolate by her brother's

body for two hours in a

Karachi hospital. "What has

happened?" she wept.

But on the following day

Benazir's ailing mother,

Begum Nusrat Khan flew in

from London to bid a final

farewell to her eldest son in

the family's ancestral home

town of Larkana. Murtaza

was buried between his

father and his brother Shah

Nawaz, murdered a decade

ago by General Zia's secret

agents. And only hours after

the funeral, his mother

accused his sister Benazir of

murdering him.

"If I could get justice,"

said Nusrat, "I will register

a case of murder against

Benazir Bhutto and her husband,

Asif Ali Zardari. They were

responsible for killing him."

The crowd, supporters

of a breakaway faction of

the Pakistan People's

Party (PPP) founded by

Murtaza Bhutto, began

chanting "Benazir is a

killer."

The Bhutto family is

destroyed — and the man

who did it is Zia ul Haq. He

started by murdering

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1979.

Then he drove Bhutto's

wife and sons into exile and

held his daughter Benazir in

prison for five years. In

1985, his agents poisoned

Bhutto's younger son, Shah

Nawaz, in France. And even

from the grave, his malevolence

continues.

Mohammad Zia ul Haq

has been dead for eight

years now, blown out of the

sky in 1988 in a never-

explained aerial accident

that left nothing to put in his

coffin except his dentures.

He is not greatly missed in

Pakistan, where his burial

mound is popularly known

as "Jahra Chowk". The circle

of the dentures. But for

the Bhuttos, he has been

Nemesis incarnate.

It all started so well,

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was

Pakistan's first democrati-

cally elected president, the

son of a landed family

who was nevertheless a

committed socialist. He

turned the Pakistani establish-

ment into mortal enemies

with his talk of land

reform and nationalisation,

but the common people

loved him.

I don't deny I take an

occasional drink," Bhutto

used to tell the adoring

crowds. "But unlike the

other politicians, I don't

drink the blood of the people."

He was arrogant, demag-

ogic, and a lot longer on

rhetoric than performance

— but he was genuine, if

that counts for anything,

and he scared the Pakistani

establishment so much that

they backed General Zia's

coup against him in 1977.

They were less enthusias-

tic about the corrupt police

state that General Zia erected

on the ruins of Pakistan's

fledgling democracy after

his 1977 coup, but it was

too late. The Bhutto family

fled into exile (except

Benazir, who rotted in

prison), and the brothers

Murtaza and Shah Nawaz

created the Al Zulfikar

Organisation to wage a ter-

rorist war against Zia's

regime.

When Benazir was finally

released and sent into exile,

she took a quite different

tack. She was brighter than

the brothers, and far better

educated too (Harvard and

Oxford). She spent her time

patiently rebuilding the old

Pakistan People's Party

(PPP) from abroad — and

when Zia ul Haq was

abruptly and permanently

separated from his dentures

in 1988, she was primed and

ready.

Within months of return-

ing to Pakistan, she was

elected prime minister

promising "bread, clothing

and shelter" to Pakistan's

multitudinous poor. But

after only 20 months she

was removed from power

by the president, while her

husband, Asif Zardari, was

haunted before the courts on

corruption and influence-

peddling charges.

Since Benazir was reelect-

ed in 1993, she has been

more careful about offend-

ing the great land-owners,

the bureaucracy and the

army. She has learned the

bitter political lesson that

when the establishment is as

strong and deeply

entrenched as it is in

Pakistan, reformers must

fight only one battle at a

time.

But that meant that when

her brother Murtaza finally

returned to Pakistan in late

1993, facing criminal

charges over the 1981

hijacking of a Pakistan

plane, Prime Minister

Bhutto could not afford to

intervene and prevent his

arrest. He got out soon

enough, but he and his

mother were permanently

embittered by the experi-

ence. Even her younger sister

Sanam turned against

Benazir.

For the past three years

Murtaza and his mother

have waged a relentless

political war against

Benazir. He was driven by

sheer ego, his traditionalist

mother by her conviction

that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's

political power must pass to

his eldest son, not to a

younger daughter. They

created a breakaway faction

of the PPP, and Murtaza

was openly abusive about

Benazir's husband, claim-

ing: "I'll expose the corrupt

activities of Asif Baha and

the 40 thieves."

Benazir bore it bravely

and silently, as she does

most things. (She is the

only elected leader ever to

give birth in office, and she

only took two days' off). In

July she even invited

Murtaza to her official resi-

dence for talks. However,

he emerged saying: "Before

the meeting I thought there

could be some convergence

of views, but the gulf has

become even wider." And

last Friday, when police

stopped Murtaza in front of

his Karachi home, a gun

battle erupted that left him

and seven followers dead.

It was not Benazir's fault,

Society on the Move

Think tank stays with mentors from the Maghreb

Up on the 14th floor of the Housing Bank Building the post of secretary general of the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) is changing hands. Outgoing Secretary General Ali Oumlil turns over the reins of this 15-year-old pan-Arab non-governmental organisation, established on the initiative of HRH Crown Prince Hassan and 25 eminent figures, to ATF Board of Trustees Member Ali Attiga. Dr. Oumlil, a 1977 graduate of the Sorbonne, will return to his other niche in academia at Mohammed the Fifth University in his native Morocco. There, as a full professor, he will resume lecturing and research at the Faculty of Letters and Humanities. His life's work has focused on the promotion of human rights. For nearly seven years Dr. Oumlil was president of the Moroccan Association of Human Rights and director of its newspaper *Attadmoun/Solidarité*. He was president of the Moroccan Organisation for Human Rights, a member of the General Secretariat of the Cairo-based Arab Organisation for Human Rights as well as a member of the Executive Committee of the Arab Institute for Human Rights. Dr. Oumlil says that he will continue to be active in his various affiliations in Jordan, one of which is as a member of the World Affairs Council. In fact, he expects that he will now have more time to devote to those activities. His tenure as ATF secretary general will have approached four years when he departs for Rabat in early October.

DR. ALI 2: Dr. Ali Ahmad Attiga takes over at the ATF on Oct. 2. Dr. Attiga spent more than 36 years working in different areas of economic and social development. His experience covers central banking, economic research, planning and development, insurance and investment, oil and energy. He held senior managerial positions at national, regional and international levels. Until his early retirement from the United Nations in February 1994, at his request, he was United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assistant administrator and regional director for the Bureau of Arab States in New York. Prior to that he was UNDP resident representative and U.N. resident coordinator in Jordan for four years. In that capacity he was responsible for coordinating and supervising humanitarian and emergency relief operations during the 1990-91 Gulf crisis. Before beginning his U.N. career in 1987, he was secretary general of the Organisation of the Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) in Kuwait for 14 years. In his home country, Libya, he held leading positions in public and private sectors including director of economic research at the Central Bank of Libya, minister of planning, and minister of national economy. Dr. Attiga was also the founding chairman of Libya's first National Investment Company and chairman of the Libyan Hotel and Tourism Company. In January 1995, he was named as a special envoy of the Secretary General of the United Nations in connection with the Social Summit (March 1995). Dr. Attiga published three books and many articles and seminar papers on oil, energy



Drs. Ali Oumlil (left) and Ali Attiga at a recent Arab Thought Forum event

and development. He holds a B.Sc. in agriculture and agriculture economics and a Ph.D. in economic development from the University of Wisconsin in the U.S. He also attended graduate school at the University of California, Berkeley. He is a member of several professional organisations, including vice-president of the Oxford Energy Club and a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Diplomacy and the Board of Trustees of the Society of International Affairs in Jordan. A good 400 guests made their way last night to the Forte Grand Hotel for a reception to bid farewell to Dr. Oumlil and to welcome, to the new post that is, Dr. Attiga.

DOING THE CIRCUIT: Jordan will welcome back an American who, himself, has dedicated much thought to the Arab World. U.S. Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, who has become the first director of the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University and was U.S. Ambassador to Syria and Israel, will be visiting October 15-17. Mr. Djerejian's visit is at the invitation of the Binational Fulbright Commission in Jordan as a 50th Anniversary Distinguished Fulbright Fellow. He will speak before the World Affairs Council on the "U.S. and Islam," and before the combined Rotary clubs at a lecture/luncheon. His itinerary also includes Dr. "Eidawit" with Jordan Television talk show host Rana Khouli, which will be aired at a later date. Business and pleasure engagements are many, among them a luncheon with the media hosted by U.S. Ambassador Wesley Egan. The U.S. embassy will have Mr. Djerejian for themselves one evening when he is scheduled to lecture on "The Peace Process: Where is it Going." As a former assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern

Affairs to both Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton, Mr. Djerejian has been considered a State Department star. In the early 80s he was deputy chief of mission in Amman and was highly engaged in developments of those times. Circumstances permitting, Ambassador Djerejian may meet with His Majesty King Hussein and HRH Crown Prince Hassan. He is scheduled to leave the U.S. with his former boss, James Baker, and spend a few days with him in Vienna. The two former peace brokers will then go separate ways, perhaps, with Mr. Djerejian heading to Israel and Syria before the Jordan leg of his trip — his last stop.

SHIP-SHAPE: The Geneva-based International Multimodal Transport Association, established two and a half years ago, recently convened its first general meeting, this one in Singapore, where it adopted a plan to become an important and influential association in the world of trade and multimodal transport technologies. The meeting also resulted in the election of a seven-member committee representing nearly every major region of the world. On that committee is a Jordanian who worked closely with Lloyds and other international organisations in replacing the offshore inspections of Jordan-bound ships by an onshore arrangement managed by Lloyds two years ago. He is, and has been for the last six years, Executive Manager of the Shipping Agents Association-Jordan Sultan Muhaisen. The other members of the committee, which is expected to look into the environmental and developmental implications and consequences of modern multimodal transport, are from Argentina, Australia, Egypt, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Switzerland.

SELLING A STORY: In the area of multimodal texts, some readers may recall that in 1994, the U.S. Information Agency launched a programme called "Corridors of Culture," which brought delegations of America's foremost writers, editors, publishers and literary agents to host countries to share their insights and practical information with their counterparts. This October the United States Information Service in Amman will host three publishers and literary agents and a writer: they are Lawrence Jordan, director of Lawrence Jordan Literary Agency in New York, Richard Hunt, director of merchandising for Banam, Doubleday and Dell publishers in New York, Charles Robinson, owner of Village Books in Bellingham, Washington. The team will conduct a seminar at the University of Jordan under the theme "From the Muse to the Marketplace," meet with members of the Publishers Union at the Amman Chamber of Commerce, and address the Cosmopolitan Rotary Club about the business of publishing. The group will also meet with members of the Writers Union and have a poetry meeting at the Amman

Bookshop in Jabal Anman. The "people of letters" are accompanied by Director of Arts America Caroline Craft. Their visit coincides with the International Jordan Book Fair being held from Oct. 8 to 10.

SPOTLIGHT PAKISTAN: The Embassy of Pakistan, in cooperation with Darat Al Fannim and Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, is organising two colourful cultural activities for late September and early October. First, on Sept. 29 and 30, art critic Nelly Lama will present a slide-lecture on "Pakistan's Mughal (Mogul) Heritage: History of Mughal Art, Architecture, Miniatures and Jewellery." The evening lectures will be held at the Darat in Jabal Weibdeh, and Ms. Lama will explore "a period in which diverse cultures were blended harmoniously under the patronage of the great Mughal emperors to produce one of the most creative artistic eras known to history" and which permeates Pakistani culture to this day. Then on Oct. 9, a charity event under the orchestration of Meher Sarwar Nagvi, wife of the Pakistani Ambassador, will feature "Wedding Traditions Around the World." With efforts from several embassies and expatriates, the show entails a presentation of wedding costumes and traditions from many countries. The event is held under the patronage of HRH Princess Surayh Al Hassan and in cooperation with the Young Muslim Women's Association, which the Princess has been patron of since 1972. Billed as a "ladies afternoon" the staging of these wedding traditions will be at the Annu Hotel.

WAVE THOSE FLAGS: Other diplomatic events ringing in the fall started last evening with Indian Ambassador Gajanan Wakankar and his wife Neela hosting a reception to mark the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme Day. Other events celebrating their countries' national days are: Swiss Ambassador Gian Federico Pedotti and his wife on Sept. 30, newly-arrived German Ambassador Peter Mende and his wife Margret on Oct. 5, Republic of China (Taiwan) Ambassador Edmund Y. Lin and his wife on Oct. 10, and Austrian Ambassador Michel Stiglbauer and his wife Natalie on Oct. 26. Spain also commemorates its national day in October on the 12th, but the reception hosted by Ambassador Juan Manuel Cabrera will also be an opportunity for his associates and friends to wish him good-bye. Mr. Cabrera, who is currently away on holiday in Madrid, will end his tenure, but the answer to where he will go next will have to wait until his return to Amman. Names of successors are being tossed about, but as with the directorship of the Cervantes Institute, the Spanish cultural centre, nothing can be confirmed yet.

Jennifer Hamarneh

H. Kong fashion designers inspired by 1997

By Raymond Chow
The Associated Press

HONG KONG — Hong Kong fashion designers Pacino Wan and April Wong share a love of colour and simple lines, as well as a similar inspiration: 1997.

As Hong Kong's return from British to Chinese rule approaches on July 1, change of sovereignty-related fashion is quickly becoming the rage.

Miniskirts made from China's five-starred red flag, dresses emblazoned with portraits of Britain's royal family and men's briefs stamped "the People's Republic of China" are just some of the designs likely to be raising some colonial eyebrows along Hong Kong catwalks this year.

Leading a group of at least three designers inspired by the end of 156 years of British rule is Peter Lau, an established designer whose Chinese flag miniskirt made newspaper front pages when he unveiled it in January as part of his winter collection.

"The Chinese national flag looks tough and reminds many people of power. I give it a new and softer look," the pony-tailed 40-year-old designer said in an interview. "It is just fun."

Lau has since been joined by Wan and Wong, whose creative juices are also stimulated by 1997.

Wan's summer collection, unveiled during Hong Kong fashion week, came in two 1997-related parts: One symbolising Hong Kong's colonial past, the other its Chinese future.

In part I, Wan put a portrait of Britain's queen mother waving goodbye on the frock of an A-line dress, beside the words "bye-bye."

He also had dresses and jeans printed with faded-looking Union Jacks, and pants with Prince Charles's portrait on one leg and Princess Diana's on the other, under a skimpy top saying "Divorce" in large black letters.

Wan, 32, says he didn't mean to poke fun at the royal family but rather to highlight "Things that have stayed with us for a long time and will suddenly disappear after 1997."

In part II, Wan stuffed Chinese money and work permits into the pockets of dresses, and made buttons from Chinese coins, so "people will get used to, accept and like them."

He also used bright colours to express his hope that Hong Kong's future will be "Sharp and bright."

"I'm staying behind. I have no other options. Since 1997 is drawing near, why can't I spread my optimistic feeling around?"

With her designs covered with pictures of such Chinese products as beer and cigarettes, 24-year-old Wong says she wants to teach Hong Kong youths to appreciate Chinese-made fashion, instead of pursuing Western labels.

"After 1997, Hong Kong will become a unique place blending Eastern and Western cultures. I wish people to shift slowly toward Eastern styles," said Wong, a recent fashion graduate whose designs, including "the People's Republic of China" briefs, were exhibited at Hong Kong Fashion Week.

Said Ruth Du Cann, a fashion director at Elle magazine: "They are going back to their roots — to get something good in their culture. They also realise the West is always in love with the East and they can capitalise on that."

Tea firms brew up export success

By Brenda Watson

IT WAS Queen Catherine, wife of Charles II, who first introduced tea drinking as a social and family habit to the English in 1662 when she took chests of tea to Britain from Portugal as part of her wedding dowry. Today Britain exports tea to over 120 different countries including China. According to the marketing organisation, Food From Britain, in 1995 British exports of black tea were worth some £131 million, or 35,000 tonnes in volume, and The Tea Council, based in London, reports producer members account for 66.5 per cent of all world tea exports.

Britain's £530 million tea industry is dominated by a handful of big brand names — Tetley (number one tea bag brand), Typhoo (Premier Beverages), Brooke Bond PG Tips (Van den Bergh Foods) and Twinings. Older famous names such as Ridgways, Hornimans, Lyons, Jacksons of Piccadilly and Fortnum & Mason live on also and there are a number of renowned smaller regional tea specialists such as Taylors of Harrogate.

Britain imports around 20 per cent of the major tea producers' exports, buying tea from India, Sri Lanka, East Africa, China and Indonesia. According to The Tea Council there are approximately 1,500 different tea blends, the constant flavour and quality of the well-known household brands being reliant on the skills of tasters and blenders to create time-honoured tastes from different types of tea grown in varying climatic conditions.

The famous English Breakfast blend, for example, is a blend of Ceylon and Assam for full flavour and strength, while Earl Grey is

a blend of black China and Darjeeling teas which have been treated with the citrus oil of bergamot which gives its characteristic scented aroma and flavour. Earl Grey is one of the most popular of the speciality teas and said to be named after the second Earl Grey who delighted a Chinese Mandarin with his praise of tea, so the honourable Oriental gentleman concocted this special blend for his noble English friend.

Growth end

Speciality teas like English Breakfast and Earl Grey represent the growth end of the tea market in Britain and abroad, with Twinings dominating the sector. Twinings exports to over 90 different countries with its Twinings, Jacksons of Piccadilly and Fortnum & Mason brands. Earl Grey is far and away its leading blend. New markets are now emerging in Central and South America and South East Asia for the company which has exported tea since the 18th century.

Twinings was exporting its teas to America at the time of the Boston Tea Party, although none of its teas were involved in that particular incident, says the company. Thomas Twining met President Washington on a trip to America in 1796. In 1910 Harvey Twining opened a shop on the Boulevard Haussmann in Paris which is still trading successfully today.

British breakfast products, including flavoured and breakfast teas are proving very good business for top French department store La Grande Epicerie de Paris, whereas in Britain, perhaps the favourite occasion on which to take tea is in the afternoon. This ritual is

believed to have originated from Anna, 7th Duchess of Bedford, in the early 1800s. Afternoon tea, traditionally consisting of your favourite pot of tea, tiny sandwiches, scones with jam, and cakes may be enjoyed at home, in a small country tea room, or in the elegance of a luxury London hotel such as The Ritz.

Fashionable digestif

The Tea Council's 1996 Definitive Guide to the Best Tea Shops in Britain lists more than 70. Included in the guide (which is available overseas from The Tea Council) is Shepherd's Tea Rooms in Chichester, which was voted Top Tea Place of the Year in 1995 for the third time. The Tea Council is also working hard to promote tea as a fashionable drink after dinner instead of coffee.

Some wonderful pairings of teas in the restaurant setting are suggested. Try Lapsang Souchong with creamy Stilton and a glass of Tawny Port or a second flush Darjeeling, considered to be the champagne of teas, with apple strudel.

In Britain tea continues to be the number one beverage accounting for around 43 per cent of everything drunk and in consumption terms the United Kingdom tops the world list with nearly 80 per cent of the population brewing and drinking tea daily in the home. However, home consumption is declining as tea faces increasing competition from soft drinks.

Tea bags dominate the home market, accounting for 87.5 per cent of all the tea brewed in Britain and in an attempt to stir the market afresh Brooke Bond has spent four years researching a pyramid-shaped tea bag, claimed to be the first major

innovation since the launch of the square bag in 1951.

Tetley, which introduced the round tea bag in 1989, lifting sales in the sector by some 15 per cent, might disagree. Brooke Bond's new bag is being rolled out regionally where the new line will replace square bags. The new shape, according to the company, offers quicker release of aroma and taste, performing like loose tea once in the pot.

World first

Tetley is also trialling a new style of bag, this time in Australia where Tetley has a factory near Melbourne. The new n-drip Drawstring Tea Bag, claimed as a world first, has been successfully test marketed in Western Australia and Tetley is considering a national roll in that market and other possible countries for this product. In February

1996 Tetley Australia launched a range of speciality teas — Emperor's Garden Green Tea, aimed at the health conscious consumer and Tetley English Breakfast, Irish Breakfast and Earl Grey.

Tetley boasts the number one tea bag brand in Canada and Portugal as well as in the U.K. Canada, the United States and Australia are very strong markets for The Tetley Group which was created in July 1995 when the Lyons worldwide beverage business was acquired from Allied Domecq.

Tetley operates in more than 30 countries worldwide and has the world's largest capacity tea factory in Britain at Eaglescliffe, in northern England.

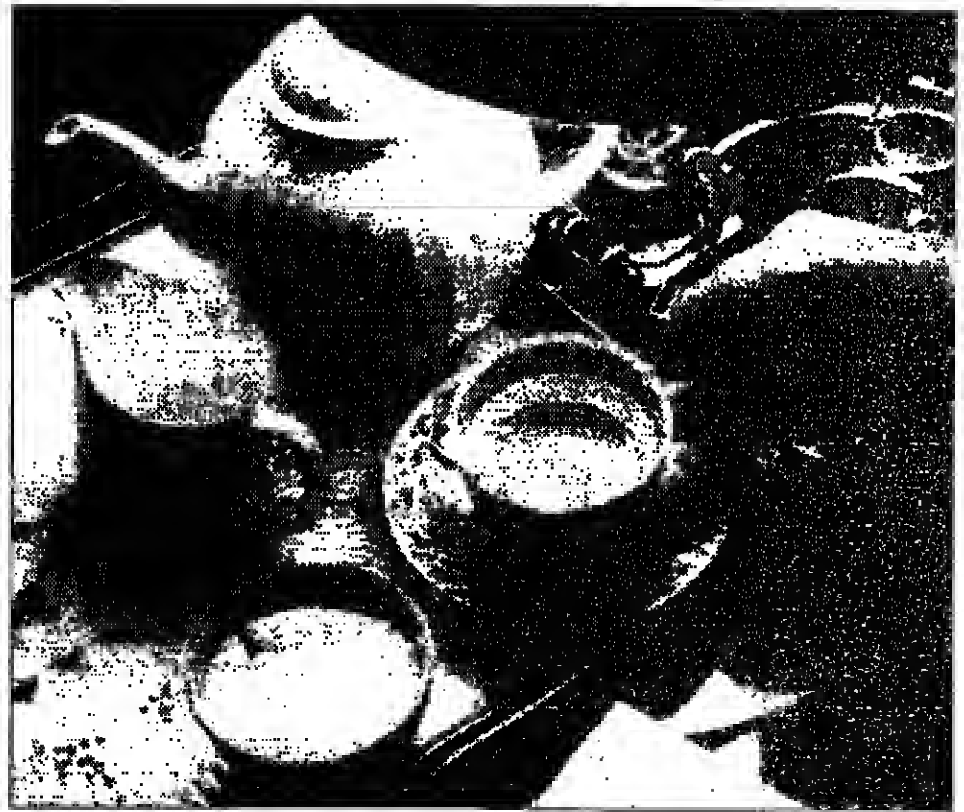
In Europe there are a number of success stories such as Horniman's brand being the number one in Spain, a 25 per cent share of the tea bag market in Malta, and increasing sales of tea bags

to Poland, through Tetley Polska.

Huge markets

In around two years Tetley has shot from being newest market entrant to one of the leading imported tea bag brands with over 14 per cent of the black tea bag market which is the second largest in Europe after the U.K. Other potentially huge black tea markets being considered by Tetley for expansion include India and Russia.

Tetley is already aiming to create a niche black tea market in China with the test launch last September of a Western-style tea bag brand. With a name roughly translated as "bringing prosperity," the product is a specially-blended alternative to green tea, designed to appeal to upwardly mobile young Chinese. It is being tested in supermarkets in Shanghai — LPS Feature.



English Breakfast Tea is one of Britain's best known brands

The year 'Double Zero'

By Jean-Claude Elias

THE WORLD of personal computing is full of oddities. Far from upsetting anybody, this state of affairs — except when it reaches a tragic dimension, which it rarely does — has only one effect: To delight the media.

Recently, several major newspapers and periodicals in Europe and the United States, spread panic among their readers.

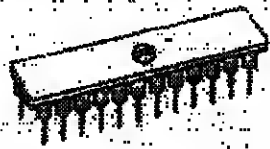
The subject? The infamous "year 2000" syndrome. When the first Operating Systems (OS) for PCs, the set of essential programmes that allows users to manage their machine, were designed in the early eighties, engineers had the difficult task to make things simple and short. The shorter the better. Memory and disk space were scarce and rather expensive. Therefore every character saved had its importance.

This principle led software specialists to opt for the short form of the calendar year, when displayed by the OS. The date "19-Nov-1995" was therefore shown as "19-Nov-95" for example. Although two characters may not seem that important now, they were then. Besides, even in manual work, many people use the last two digits of the year for speed and simplicity, so it was not considered as a weakness.

However, with the approach of the year 2000, showing the last two digits is just not enough. While it seems obvious that the computer can internally calculate any date format you want, the display on the screen constitutes a problem in itself.

If you are using MS-Excel for instance, you can choose to display the date in any format you wish. Many programmes allow you to do so. There are however numerous cases where this is not true. MS-DOS operating system for one will only show the last two digits. The worst cases are the tailor-made programmes that may be developed for companies or organisations, based on the "last two digits" method. Not only the display or the printout after the year 1999 will be misleading, but also calculations and sorting will inevitably produce erroneous results. Such software will consider someone born in the year 2002 to be older than someone born in 1970, because 02 is less than 70

chip talk



(before it, chronologically speaking). Similarly, calculation on banking interest will give amusing results too. Indeed, all date-dependent software may suffer from this shortcoming: Insurance packages, social security terms, etc.

Again, it is not the machines computing capabilities that cause the problem but only the way dates are presented. All those systems who take into consideration only the last two digits of the year must be reviewed and corrected. Whereas this solution sounds obvious, trivial even, it is not. The correction or amendment of such a huge number of programmes will cost users millions of dollars and will take time. If the solution is simple, in its technical aspect, it is a daunting task logistically speaking. Large corporations have already started the work.

Some programming languages like Clipper have taken this limitation into consideration long time ago. In Clipper, programmers have the option to set the "SET CENTURY" parameter as follows. Used normally, the SET CENTURY is set to OFF, and a year's value is expressed by its last two digits, but if you specify SET CENTURY ON, then the whole four digits are used. Why didn't all software developers think of that?

The problem, as always, has been amplified — remember the frenzy caused by the first virus attacks six or seven years ago. The French magazine Le Nouvel Observateur (May 96) makes it look like the end of the world. Although it will take some effort and careful planning to overcome this deficiency, computer specialists will once again beat the odds and we will all live happily ever after.

You can have everything, except..., that which you really want

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

WHEN YOU have booked yourself in for a fortnight at a hotel down by the sea to get away from it all, the last thing you would want is another set of problems. But, as Rajab found out, even at a seaside hotel there are new problems. Such as what to have for breakfast.

Rajab studied the breakfast menu on the first day and hesitated. There were things on the menu that he had not eaten for months. Things that sounded both tempting and threatening. Salmon, shrimps, pudding, crepes...

"May I take your order, sir?"

He looked up into the face of the waiter, a smooth expressionless face. He smiled at the waiter. The waiter did not smile back. Suddenly he felt animosity towards the waiter. He looked again at the menu. His eyes fell on an item he had not noticed before. It said, "Eggs any style."

"I would like eggs, please," he said.

"How would you like them?"

"Art Deco."

"Excuse me, sir?"

"It says, 'eggs any style'. My favourite style is Art Deco."

The waiter's face flickered ever so slightly.

"I will see what can be done, sir."

He returned 10 minutes later with a boiled egg sitting at the top of a very thin, very tall, undeniably Art Deco egg cup. It had a very long, undeniably 1920s spoon with it.

"Thank you," Rajab said.

"Not at all," said the waiter.

The next morning at breakfast Rajab looked at the waiter in the eyes and asked for neo-classical eggs.

"I'll see what can be done, sir," said the waiter.

He returned with a plate of scrambled eggs, arranged tastefully under a Palladian arch of toast.

"Thank you," said Rajab.

"Not at all," said the waiter.

On the third day Rajab asked for Fauvist eggs.

"Very good, sir," said the waiter.



What he brought back was a plate of eggs loosely cooked and dyed with purple and red, smeared across the plate to look like an angry sunset. It was inedible. But it was undeniably Fauvist. (Fauvism was a short-lived painting movement which preceded Cubism, distinguished by its love of bright colours and bold shapes.)

"Thank you," said Rajab, pushing the plate to one side.

"Not at all, sir," said the waiter, taking the plate away.

On succeeding days Rajab asked for his eggs to be done in a dazzling variety of styles: Futurist, absurdist, Jazz Age, and melodramatic.

The waiter, backed by an imaginative kitchen, was never once baffled.

On the last day, at breakfast, Rajab asked for his eggs to be done in a post-modernist style.

"We at this hotel do not think that post-modernism is worthy to be called a style, sir," said the waiter coldly. "It is a mere mixture of mannerisms."

"So will you not bring me a post-modernist style egg?"

"No, sir."

The two men stared at each other.

"In that case," said Rajab, "bring me some shrimps."

The waiter went away triumphant. He told the kitchen that they had outsmarted the egg-eater. In fact, the truth was quite different. After nearly two weeks of eggs, Rajab was quite constipated and needed almost no excuse to choose something else.

JTV CHANNEL TWO WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, September 26, 1996

3:00	Holy Koran
3:05	Jonny Quest
3:30	UEFA Football Match
4:30	Take Your Pick
5:00	News Flash
5:02	French Programme — Cirque
5:30	Show — Surprise Sur Prise
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Ushuaia
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Here's Lucy
8:00	People Count — Documentary
8:30	Challenges
9:10	Star Trek — The Next Generation
10:00	News In English
10:25	Feature Film — Race Against Time
12:00	Starring: Patty Duke & Richard Crenna
	Family Matters

7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
8:00	American Chart Show
8:45	Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
9:10	Blackie's Magic
10:00	News In English
10:25	Dazzle — Best Seller — (Part One)
11:15	Short Story Cinema

Monday, September 30, 1996

Friday, September 27, 1996

3:00	Holy Koran
3:05	Twinkie
3:30	Name Your Adventure
4:15	Crystal Maze
5:00	News Flash
5:02	French Programme — Les Polluaires
5:30	Telefilm — Les Cordiers Juge Et Flic
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Allo La Terre
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Growing Pains
8:00	Nasty Boys
8:45	Secret Weapons
9:10	The Wanderer
10:00	News In English
10:25	Feature Film — Adventures Of Don Juan
	Starring: Errol Flynn & Viveca Lindfors

2:00	Teletext
3:00	Holy Koran
3:05	Adventure On The Rainbow Pond
3:30	UEFA Football Match
5:00	News Flash
5:02	French Programme — Sciences Cartoon
5:15	Children Programme — La Vie Devant Moi
5:30	Game Show — Pyramide
6:00	Magazine — La Marche Du Siecle/Part Two
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Science — Cinq Sur Cinq
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	The Hypnotic World Of Paul McKenna
8:00	Deep Probe Expeditions
9:10	The Lazarus Man
10:00	News In English
10:25	The Bold And The Beautiful
11:10	Bodies Of Evidence

Tuesday, October 1, 1996

Saturday, September 28, 1996

2:00	Teletext
3:00	Holy Koran
3:05	Moonin
3:30	UEFA Football Match
5:00	News Flash
5:02	French Programme — Sciences Cartoon
5:15	Children Programme — La Vie Devant Moi
5:30	Game Show — Les Bons Genies
6:00	Series — Police Des Polices
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Faut Pas Rever
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Baker's Field
8:00	The Album Show
8:45	Miami Vice
9:30	Prism
10:00	News In English
10:25	The Bold And The Beautiful
11:15	Feature Film — The Ultimate Revenge
	Starring: Lou Diamond Phillips & Melind Dillon

Wednesday, October 2, 1996

Sunday, September 29, 1996

2:00	Teletext
3:00	Holy Koran
3:05	Fievels American Tails
3:30	Just The Job
3:45	Mac & Mutley
4:00	Italian Soccer
5:00	News Flash
5:02	French Programme — Sciences Cartoon
5:15	Children Programme — La Vie Devant Moi
5:30	Game Show — Game Show — Qui Est Qui
6:00	Magazine — La Marche Du Siecle/Part One
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Sports Et Musique

2:00	Teletext
3:00	Holy Koran
3:05	Iris — The Happy Professor
3:20	Flintstones
3:45	The Adventures
4:10	Kelly
4:30	Earth Revealed (Documentary)
5:00	News Flash
5:02	Document — La France Aux 1000 Villages
5:30	Varieties — Sacrifice Ou La Legende
6:00	Document — Les Enfants Du Voyage
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Sport Et Musique
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	The Four Seasons
8:00	Super Stars Of Action
8:30	Chancer (Drama)
9:10	Hunter
10:00	News In English
10:25	The Bold And The Beautiful
11:10	Hart To Hart

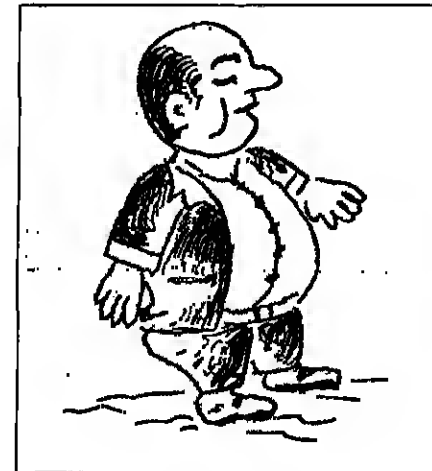
ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

BY MOHAMMAD A. SHUAIR

HOWLERS

** This dictionary is useful.

Hathal qamoos muffed.



- * HE has a stomach without a memory.
- * HE has T.B. — Twin Bellies.
- * HE is a man who carries a lot of weight — in his stomach.
- * HE can take a shower without getting his feet wet.
- * THERE is one thing bigger than his stomach — his appetite.
- * HE snapped to his wife: "Where's all the grocery money going? And she said: "If you really want to know, stand sideways and look in the mirror."
- * HE has an optimistic stomach and a pessimistic digestion.
- * HE can sit round a table all by himself.
- * HE should be appointed chairman of the world's Physical Fatness programme.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

- ** My watch is new. Saati jadida.
- ** His wife is short. Zawjatohu qasira.
- ** The colour of your shirt is pretty. Lawnu qameesika jameel.
- ** Her sister is extremely charming. Okhtoha fatina jiddan.
- ** The tea is hot. Al-shaay saakhin.
- ** The light is dim. An-noor da'eef.
- ** The car is fast. As-sayyara saree'a.
- ** The lesson is easy. Ad-dars sahl.
- ** The prices are high. Al-ass'aar murta'fe'a.
- ** The road is long and tiring. At-tareeq taweel wa-mut'ib.
- ** The room is clean and tidy. Al-ghurfa naathefa wa-murattaba.
- ** The door is open but the window is shut. Al-bab maftooh walakinnash-shubbak maqfool.
- ** The milk is cold but the bread is fresh. Al-haleeb baared walakinnal-khobz taazij.
- ** The peasant is energetic. Al-fallah nasheet.
- ** The boy is industrious. Al-walad mujtahid.

JOKES

- * GUIDE: "This castle is very old. Nothing has been changed or restored since 300 years."
- * TOURIST: "It must belong to the same landlord in whose building we live."
- * ONCE a philosopher was asked whether he likes to be in Paradise or in Hell.
- * "In fact," he said, "I prefer Paradise, but fire is more convenient for me as it'll include the best of my friends."

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

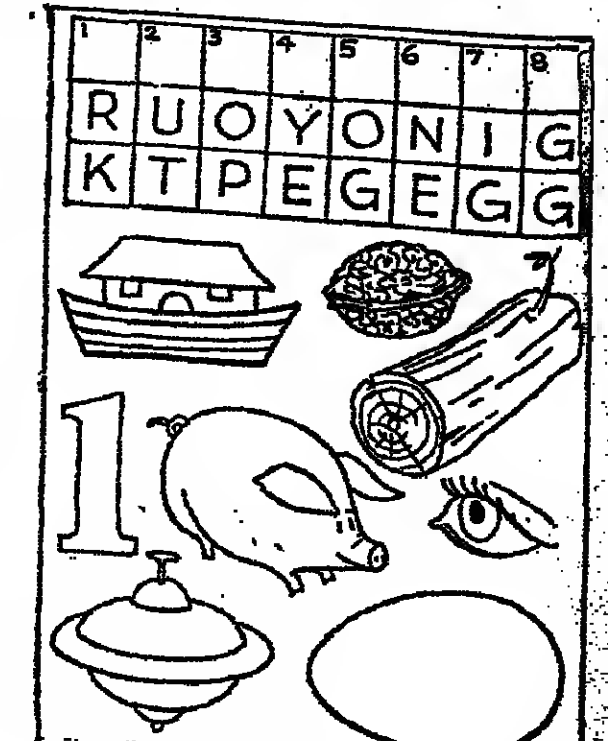
1. Name the FIVE principles of Mahatma Gandhi.
2. With which sport is Ezra Cup associated?
3. The term "Tee" is associated with what?
4. Which is the largest stadium in the world?
5. The daily growth of nails on average is.....

- a- 0.05 mm.
- b- 0.10 mm.
- c- 0.15 mm.
- d- 0.20 mm.

PUZZLES

A SPEEDY ANIMAL

FILL in the empty squares to name each object, and at the same time you will name a wild animal.



Dustin Hoffman pursues roles with intensity that infuriates directors

By Bob Thomas
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — He has done it all, from Sbylock to an investigative reporter to a night club comic to Willy Loman to an autistic savant. Yet after four decades as an actor, Dustin Hoffman pursues his roles with an intensity that can drive his directors batty.

Hoffman has achieved notoriety for his penchant to explore every nook and cranny of the character he is playing. This can infuriate directors, not to mention cost-conscious producers desperate to meet a schedule.

It was reliably reported that during the filming of Tootsie, an argument with director Sydney Pollack continued into the studio parking lot, the loud exchange ending in fistcuffs.

But his fellow actors rarely express annoyance with Hoffman's constant search for the perfect way to do a scene.

Dennis Franz, who co-stars with Hoffman in the new film American Buffalo, likens the actor's technique to that of Gene Hackman:

"Gene gives such honest deliveries to you, to not give anything as honest back to him is cheating him. ... Dustin has the same intensity of trying to find as many ways of doing a particular scene that he exhausts himself. He really puts every ounce of energy that he has into a full day's work."

"It's exhausting, but it's work. We're not playing here. It should be exhausting."

Though his work habits remain unchanged, Hoffman off the set seems to have mellowed as he approaches his 60th year. He had a reputation for being uptight in interviews, but during a session in a west-side hotel room, he was



Dustin Hoffman

loose and candid. Between sips from a bottle of beer, he enjoyed tweaking the Hollywood establishment.

"This is a new ball game, this movie business," he said. "A whole new ball game. If the 'suits' were around before, boy, they're omnipresent now."

"Suits" is Hollywood slang for studio and network executives who impose their views on the creative process. Hoffman was reflecting on American Buffalo, produced for a fraction of the cost of mainstream studio films.

"Every picture is \$55 million to open it," he continues. "The average is \$35 million to make it, \$20 million for prints and advertising. Advertising \$20 million. They have no TV advertising on this picture, none."

"It's liberating in a way (to make a low-budget film). It's nice to be working and not have that pres-

sure that everybody has in a normal, mainstream, studio film. You go out there and (the suits) are in the air like smog."

"Are you going to make the first weekend (theatre business)? If you don't make the first weekend, you're on the video shelf in four weeks."

He laid out the facts of his current life:

"I grew up in Los Angeles, now I live in New York. I have six children. I have a grandchild. I have a wonderful wife. I'm 59 as of Aug. 8. I have a penile implant. Just kidding, but it's going to be in the tabloids."

"My wife has convinced me that I'm much easier to deal with when I'm working. That's because I'm away. ... I like working. I have a new production company, and we're producing stuff that I'm not in — low-budget stuff. I like trying to find a way to beat the kind of business that it has

become.

"It's liberating to make a film like American Buffalo. It's liberating to say I'm not going to be in a movie because it is dangerous in its violence. I refuse to believe that it has no impact. It's a crazy country that we now live in."

Dustin Hoffman is that rarity: A movie star born and raised in Los Angeles. After graduating from Los Angeles high school, he entered Santa Monica City College with the aim of becoming a concert pianist. He dropped out to study acting at the Pasadena Playhouse.

He moved to New York and worked as a janitor and other subsistence jobs while looking for stage roles. His luck was meager and, during one period, he slept on the floor of Gene Hackman's kitchen.

After eight years, he finally started landing small roles in TV dramas and off-Broadway plays. Mike Nichols saw him in a British farce EH and decided he was the one to play Benjamin Braddock in The Graduate.

Hoffman, who was 30, protested that Braddock was "kind of Anglo-Saxon, tall, slender and good-looking. I'm short and Jewish," Nichols cast him anyway.

That was 1967, and he has been a star ever since. Nominated for The Graduate, Midnight Cowboy and Lenny, he finally won the Oscar for Kramer Vs. Kramer in 1979, repeating with Rain Man in 1988. He has also distinguished himself on the stage in Death Of A Salesman and The Merchant Of Venice.

American Buffalo, which co-stars Franz, is based on the David Mamet play in which two of life's losers plot a heist that is bound to fail. It is obviously not des-

tined to be an early autumn blockbuster.

"I'm shocked to hear that," Hoffman reacted in mock surprise. "We're not going to do what Independence and Twister and The Rock and The Yock have done?"

Why would he work for a salary vastly lower than his normal fee (approximately \$10 million)? He thought for a few beats.

"There's not a lot of great parts around," he observed. "There's maybe a handful of great American roles by great American authors. ... Stanley Kowalski in Streetcar, Willy Loman in Death Of A Salesman."

"This is the toughest stuff to memorise. Tougher than Shakespeare, tougher than Harold Pinter, tougher than Arthur Miller. The same sentence is repeated with prepositions in different places. ...

"Mamet has said in interviews that the verbiage is a way of expressing alienation. The more talk he gives the actors, the more he can show the lack of contact that's made. The more expletives he can give, the more he can show how inarticulate the characters are."

"These characters (in American Buffalo) use expletives in and out of their sentences and still end up with half-sentences. He's trying to say that we are living in a time more than ever when there is a great barrier between us. We are talking and talking and talking without knowing what we're talking about. It's just all words, and there's no real spiritual connection."

The actors enjoyed the luxury of three weeks' rehearsal before filming. The experience was unique for Franz, who reported, "We have about 20 minutes' rehearsal before each scene of NYPD Blue."

Hoffman adds: "I just



Dustin Hoffman as Shylock in The Merchant of Venice

realised about an hour ago that the only other experience I had was The Graduate, which we rehearsed for three weeks. After three weeks, we could have opened on Broadway."

Elderly peasants take Vietnam's stage by storm

By John Chalmers
Reuters



French-Vietnamese choreographer Ea Sola, fans herself while she watches her troupe of elderly peasant women rehearse at Hanoi's Cong Nhan Theatre (Reuters photo)

HANOI — It was somehow fitting that choreographer Ea Sola should bring her troupe of elderly peasant women back to Vietnam in September, just when vast areas of the country were being ravaged by tropical storms and flooding.

The group's dance, "Han Han Vu Con Mua" (The Drought And The Rain), is a bitter-sweet testimony to their nation's fortune in the face of calamity.

A young French-Vietnamese woman who left her war-ravaged country as a teenager, Ea Sola has won the approval of audiences in both Europe and North America for her production's disconcerting mix of folk tradition and modernism.

But back at home, The Drought And The Rain has triggered consternation and acrimonious debate in art circles.

In a country where poverty and stark communism have kept novel art forms at bay, it is no surprise that Hanoi audiences were more excited about a recent visit

by the Belarussian Ballet Company than they were about 13 old ladies twirling across a stage.

Ea Sola's dancers are no ballerinas, it is true.

Most of the women have spent their lives toiling in the paddy fields of Thai Binh, a poverty-stricken province in the north of the country. The youngest is 51 years old and the oldest, spritely for her age, is 77.

Nevertheless, it was the dance's portrayal of a country still reeling in undignified pain which riled the youth newspaper Tuoi Tre so much.

"It's really a dull picture of the past," Tuoi Tre fumed after a performance in Ho Chi Minh City. "And the audience cannot ignore the link to the present since there was an allusion."

"The sooner we stop this performance, the sooner we can end this smear and insult," it added.

The Drought And The Rain works from the base of two folk legends. The first is a figurative battle between sun and rain, of which man is the victim, and the second is the story of a bride who loses the way

back to her husband.

Traditional instruments accompany songs which illustrate the legends while the old ladies, barefoot and in peasant garb, perform a highly stylised routine of everyday rural gestures.

Their gnarled hands claw at the air, their conical straw hats bob and weave, they stare up obsessively at the sky, they nod, they shake and they grin, toothlessly, at the audience.

At one chilling moment, the women march forward and hold out photographs of fathers, husbands and sons — martyrs of the country's wars against the French and then the Americans.

Tran Van Khe, a member of UNESCO's International Music Council and one of the production's admirers, was among those who added their voices to a rebuff of Tuoi Tre's lambasting.

"By this naturalism, she (Ea Sola) has depicted the harshness of drought and rain...The misery of Vietnamese women in wartime, the waiting and the heavy losses," Khe wrote in the Saigon Times daily.

Ea Sola says her dance sets suffering inflicted by war and the elements against a background of village and family tradition, of which the old women represent the resilient guardians. It is there that her work carries its message of hope.

It may have received a lukewarm welcome at home, but The Drought And The Rain is heading off for another tour of European countries at the end of this month.

For the simple women of Thai Binh — many of whom had never even been in a car let alone an airplane before they were recruited by Ea Sola — exposure to the Western world has been a mind-blowing experience.

But it takes more than luxury accommodation and Western world comforts to change the habits of generations. While they are on tour, the dancers sometimes sneak down to their hotel kitchen and cook themselves a bowl of rice.

American orchestras are not the recording stars they used to be

By David Bauder
The Associated Press

ALBANY, New York — A quick flip through a music store's compact disc bin shows why the market for new classical recordings by the best U.S. orchestras is drying up.

Twenty different versions of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony were on sale, ranging in price from \$16.99 by the Philadelphia Orchestra to \$5.99 by the Zagreb Orchestra.

These are troubled times for some of America's classiest names in classical music. Philadelphia's orchestra, the first in the United States to make a record, lost its recording contract this summer and its musicians went on strike.

Other big-city orchestras face the same prospect, said Philadelphia Orchestra President Joseph Kluger.

High recording costs, cut-rate price competition from overseas musicians and the indestructible nature of compact discs are all partly to blame.

"I feel for the American orchestras, but I think they're really going to have to look hard at what they're doing and make some changes," said Mark Miller, managing director of the Naxos Record Label.

Even with the extra competition, classical music's segment of the \$12 billion American recording industry has been shrinking. Classical accounted for 2.9 per cent of the market in 1995, down from 3.7 per cent the year before, according to the Recording Industry Association of America.

Naxos, which released the \$5.99 version of Beethoven's Ninth, has flooded the market with more than 1,000 other bargain-priced classical CDs since the company was founded in 1988.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's reputation may be more sterling than Zagreb's. But as long as the recording is clear and there are no sour notes, it probably makes little difference to the casual fan.

Those fans who want to build up their classical library are turning more and more to Naxos, said Martin Patmos, classical music expert at Borders Books and Music in Albany, New York.

"It's like anything else," said Mickey Granberg, consultant for the National Association of Record Merchandisers. "If you want Levi's jeans you can get the label. But if you want to go to K Mart (discount store) and get perfectly good jeans without the label, you can."

Classical music's top record labels have

competed against the low-price discs by offering their own old recordings at reduced prices. With CD technology, a recording from 30 years ago can sound as fresh as today and never wear out, said Melinda Whiting, editor of Symphony magazine.

Borders offered a 1969 recording of Beethoven's Ninth by the London Symphony Orchestra for sale on compact disc for \$7.99.

"You can see the economics here," Whiting said. "There really isn't a lot of incentive to record the old repertoire in new versions."

Unless recording costs go down, music companies have little incentive to embrace American symphonies, Kluger said. A classical piece that cost \$50,000 to be recorded in London costs more than twice that in the United States, he said.

Recording costs are central to the Philadelphia strike. Management insists on eliminating a guarantee that each musician get \$6,000 a year from broadcast and recording royalties. Instead, the orchestra is considering starting its own record company and sharing the profits with musicians if it works.

The orchestra was dropped by EMI, the first time it has been without a label since 1944, although it still has three projects to complete.

Cuts in federal arts funding that subsidised recording and the record companies' own greed should be blamed, said Jay Schaffner, an official with New York's local of the American Federation of Musicians.

Most big classical labels are owned by multinational corporations with no interest in promoting American orchestras, he said.

"Everyone is telling the musicians that they're putting themselves out of the market," Schaffner said. "Nobody is saying, 'let's open the books of the record companies.' Are they making any less profits than they used to?"

Naxos' Miller criticised the "arrogance" of some American orchestras who insist on making musical choices and want travel expenses paid for their entourage, not just for musicians.

"We seek out an artist to do a project for us," he said. "We don't seek out an artist and have them give us a project they want to do."

Artificial joints 'may pollute' human organs

By Michael Boyd

SMALL PIECES of debris created by the wear and tear of artificial joints — wear debris — may be polluting the human recipient's organs that are far removed from the implant itself. Bits of metal and plastic have been found by a British research team not only in local lymph nodes but also at more distant sites such as in the bone marrow, spleen and liver.

"We have little idea what effect this is having on these organs," says Ian Learmonth, professor of orthopaedic surgery at Bristol University, western England. "Despite this I would like to stress that so far there has been no direct association between wear debris and the development of diseases later on."

Evaluating consequences

"However, I must add that, from industrial experience, such as with asbestos, we know that the clinical complications of particulate debris are really only seen after a very long interval. Therefore we urgently need to establish a system which can evaluate the possible long-term consequences of debris that has been liberated."

These recent findings have caused considerable surprise and guarded concern in medical circles. Until recently, surgeons have looked for — and found — such wear debris only near the artificial joint.

But now that has all changed as a multi-disciplinary team of doctors, engineers and scientists based at Bristol University and the Bristol Royal Infirmary (aptly known as the Bristol Wear Debris Team) has established that there is widespread dissemination of metal debris from implants.

"Some researchers have suggested that the wear debris — under certain circumstances — causes local loosening of

the implant itself, by the production of enzymes and cytokines," says Dr. Patrick Case, a lecturer in histopathology and another member of the team. "We are now exploring whether this same debris, which may be biologically inert, has any effects on other more distant sites such as the spleen and the liver."

The implications of this research are important not just for orthopaedic surgery but for all other spheres of surgery, including dentistry in which metal instrumentation or implants are used.

Long-term effects

The reason why these revelatory discoveries have only just received medical attention is easy to understand with hindsight. Surgeons now have more than 30 years' experience of joint-replacement operations and carry out more than a million worldwide every year.

Despite this, little is known about the long-term effects of metal implants in the human body. This is because most of the early recipients died before their prosthesis wore out. But such patients are now younger, so the replacements need to be replaced — or revised — at a later date.

One of the most common problems these patients encounter is the gradual loosening of the metal and plastic joints within its natural bone surroundings because of natural wear and tear and corrosion of the prosthesis. This is associated with the production of tiny metal particles or soluble metal along with the polyethylene and cement.

Postmortem examinations

With this in mind the Bristol team therefore decided to try and establish whether there was a widespread dissemination of this debris throughout the body and if it had any effect.

Their study, published recently in the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*, involved the postmortem examination of 20 people.

Thirteen had been given metal orthopaedic implants; the other seven had never received implants and were used as the control group. As was to be expected, those whose metal joints showed obvious wear were found to have the highest level of metal debris in their organs.

Those with prostheses but no obvious wear and tear had lower levels. The control group also had some metal in their tissues but this was considered merely to be the result of environmental pollution.

"We also looked at the tissue histologically and we found that the material was contained within macrophages (large cells in the blood or lymph) that had picked up the debris presumably at the site of the joint itself and travelled within the body," says Dr. Case.

"We discovered some minor histological changes in local lymph nodes but no gross changes within the liver and the spleen. The next step is to perform detailed examinations to see whether there are any long-term changes in the tissue of the organs in which the debris collects."

The team members are very aware that if they find particles within the body, these do not necessarily have their origin in the artificial joint. So, drawing upon the wide-ranging skills available within the group, they have tried to be quite careful in their study to make sure that any particles found are not present as a result of environmental pollution.

Particles examination

They have done several tests including not only histology but also those using inductively coupled mass spectrometry, which the geologists involved routinely use in their own discipline, to try and find out the exact type and concentra-

tion of the particles and to evaluate their origin precisely.

At the root of the problem is the fact that most materials that have been developed in recent years for use in prosthesis manufacture have only been tested for bio-acceptability in bulk form. Very little is known about the in-vivo effects of tiny fragmented particles of these materials.

In addition, some of the materials used, such as titanium, are soft and are susceptible to the wear that is caused by the differential movement at the interface between the implant and the surrounding bone.

As a result of this the team will be taking a fresh look at the bioacceptable materials that are used in artificial joints. "What we are looking for is biocompatibility that covers both the biomechanical and biological aspects of the implant," says Professor Learmonth.

Biocompatibility search

"We are now using bioactive coatings to try and fix implants and with these we hope to create an ionic bonding between the body and the implant and ultimately achieve fixation of the implant with some sort of biologically degradable material. Getting this type of biocompatibility must be our long-term goal."

The Bristol team includes surgeons, pathologists, haematologists and geologists — all of whom bring to the group their expertise and newly developed technology from their individual fields.

The knowledge gained through such close collaboration is far greater than could have been obtained by the same scientists working alone. For example, by adopting geologists' techniques for metal detection, the pathologists have been able to trace in detail not only the origin but where the metal debris has ended up in the body — LPS Feature.

Heart exam may do more harm than good — study

CHICAGO (R) — A common hospital procedure used to investigate the condition of the heart does patients little good and may actually increase the risk of death, U.S. researchers said Tuesday.

Based on the research, an editorial in the journal of the American Medical Association called for a nationwide study of right heart catheterisation or, in the absence of such a study, a moratorium on the procedure by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

"Despite the widespread use of this procedure and its attendant costs, there is no evidence that it benefits patients," James Dalen, edi-

tor of the American Medical Association Journal Archives of Internal Medicine, wrote in an accompanying editorial. "To the contrary, there is evidence that it may increase morbidity and mortality."

The procedure involves inserting a thin plastic tube into a hole in the groin or elbow and guiding the tube through the circulatory system into the heart's interior. Inside the heart, the tube can measure blood pressure and oxygen levels or insert opaque dye for X-ray examination.

Researchers led by Alfred Connors Jr. at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland studied 5,735 cri-

tically ill patients, of whom 2,184 underwent right heart catheterisation within 24 hours of being admitted to an intensive care unit.

Compared to patients who did not undergo the procedure, patients who did had a 30-day mortality rate that was 24 per cent higher, stayed in intensive care an average of 1.8 days longer and ran up a hospital bill that averaged more than one-third higher at \$49,300.

Many cardiologists view the procedure, also known as pulmonary artery catheterisation, as a valuable way to measure the heart's condition. John Hoyt, president of the Society of Critical Care Medicine, said

the procedure saved thousands of lives annually and criticised the new study's methodology for not being a random patient trial.

"We do not want news coverage of the issues raised by the authors to alarm patients and their families or to compel physicians to change their method of practice," Hoyt said.

But Dalen said the motives of the medical industry may be coloured by profit, noting that one million of the catheters are sold in the United States each year and the annual cost associated with their use is more than \$2 billion.

Drug 'boosts' immune system' in AIDS cases

By Joanne Kenen
Reuter

WASHINGTON — Doctors for the first time have used low doses of a cancer-fighting drug to boost the immune system of people infected with the AIDS virus without any apparent side effects.

The research, appearing in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, was based on a six-month study of 16 patients using Interleukin 2 (IL 2).

Scientists in the past year have made remarkable strides in developing antiviral drugs that suppress the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that causes AIDS. Those drugs target the virus. The Interleukin research attempted to give them an ally by marshalling the body's own immune system defence.

Larger-scale controlled studies are needed, as are studies to determine how IL 2 works best in combination

with antiviral AIDS drugs. But the researchers at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Centre were very encouraged by the initial findings.

"In the entire history of medicine, we really have not been able to stimulate the immune system. We can suppress it — for transplants, allergies and autoimmune diseases. But we didn't know how to turn it up," lead researcher Dr. Kendall Smith told Reuters in a telephone interview. "But we achieved that ... This shows the proof of concept."

Dr. Smith said the idea was to use IL 2, with the other new "cocktails" of AIDS drugs, "to treat people as early as possible, before they've had much immune system damage."

IL 2 may also hold promise for people who are already sick from AIDS. The anti-viral drugs may reduce HIV levels in their blood, but "this may help the immune system in coming back," Dr. Smith said.

Interleukin 2 is a hormone that is a natural part of the immune system. Identified in the 1970s, it is used in chemotherapy against some cancers. But chemotherapy requires large doses and patients often have terrible side effects.

Other scientists are experimenting with chemotherapy-style IL 2 treatments for AIDS, giving large doses in the hospital for about five days at a time. The treatment is costly and the side effects can be severe.

In contrast, Dr. Smith's subjects gave themselves daily shots of small doses of IL 2, much like diabetics give themselves insulin. They did not have to go to the hospital and could continue normal daily school and work activities.

The idea was to see how low a dose would be effective in raising the number of CD-4 cells in the bloodstream. The CD-4 count is an indicator of how healthy HIV-infected people are, how well they can stave off

the virus's killer effects. The subjects had no AIDS symptoms yet and had CD4 counts of between 200 and 500 — well below normal but not "advanced" AIDS. On average, they had been HIV-infected for seven years.

Smith's team found that doses measured at 125,000 IU was too low. There were no significant side effects but there were no benefits either. At 500,000 IU, the side effects started, including low-grade fever, muscle aches and a "general bad feeling," he said.

But at 250,000 the patients' CD-4 counts rose steadily, a mean of 27 or 28 cells each month, and they had no side effects.

"The results from this study indicate that asymptomatic HIV-infected can self-administer IL 2 safely and without any detectable toxicity for six months," the scientists wrote.

"Expanded clinical trials of low dose IL 2 are now warranted."

Young Europeans said to be ignorant of hepatitis B risk

By Neil Winton
Reuter

LONDON — Young Europeans are largely unaware of the danger to their lives from hepatitis B, a health advisory body said.

Governments should introduce a mass education programme to help fight the risk, the Hepatitis Risk Advisory Board said.

Calling hepatitis B "Europe's silent killer," the group of health experts said it discovered this ignorance about hepatitis B after commissioning a survey in eight countries.

Board experts told a news conference that vaccination can afford complete protection from what it called this "deadly" disease.

"Hepatitis B is 100 times more infectious than AIDS," Thelma King Thiel, chief executive of

the U.S.-based Hepatitis Foundation International told journalists.

Ms. Thiel said hepatitis B can be caught from unprotected sexual intercourse, intravenous drug use, and from body piercing and tattoos. Sharing razors, or even contact sports can pass on the disease.

"Worldwide two million people die each year from hepatitis B and its complications, and chronic hepatitis B cases outnumber HIV cases by 50 to 1," Ms. Thiel said.

Even though most of Europe was classified mainly as a low risk area from hepatitis B, this could be in danger unless vaccination programmes were stepped up.

The board said there were about 24,000 deaths a year from hepatitis B in Europe.

"Young people travel more to higher risk areas

like South East Asia and Africa and this increases the risk," Dr. Jan Van Hattum from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands said.

"We recommend that there should be universal infant and adolescent vaccination throughout Europe," Dr. Van Hattum said.

"Hepatitis B is a potentially fatal and life-long infection of the liver and it is responsible for 80 per cent of the world's cases of liver cancer," Catherine Arkley, director of Britain's Children's Liver Disease Foundation told the meeting.

"But infection can be prevented by a simple vaccine," Ms. Arkley said.

The survey, which interviewed 1,611 people between the ages of 15 and 25 living in Germany, the Netherlands, Britain, Poland, Belgium, France, Portugal and Spain, found

that 78 per cent did not consider hepatitis B life-threatening.

The survey showed that there was more knowledge about AIDS than hepatitis B, and almost 60 per cent did not know that hepatitis B was a liver disease.

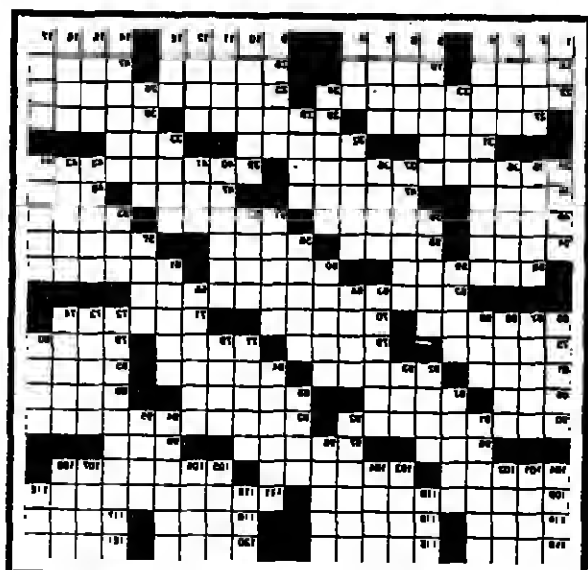
This lack of awareness undermined the need for action.

"More die in one day in the world from hepatitis B than die from AIDS in a year," said Professor Machado Caetano from Lisbon's New University.

The Hepatitis Advisory Board is made up of health experts from Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium and the U.S.

The survey was supported by money from SmithKline Beecham Plc. Skb's wide range of pharmaceutical products includes hepatitis B vaccine.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD



THE GAME OF THE NAME
By Dorothy B. Martin

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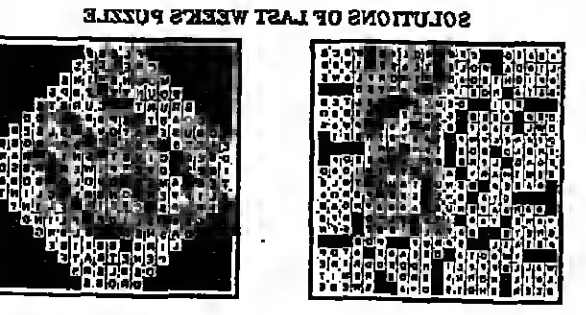
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ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

- Truth: Ahimsa (non-injury to life); removal of untouchability in general for all; Satyagraha (non-violent non-cooperation); civil obedience — in the context of the fight for freedom alien to British rule.
- Polo.
- Golf.
- Czechoslovakia.

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Contribution of Christian Arabs to the Arab-Islamic culture

By Saleh Hamarneh

ARAB CHRISTIANS have, from early on, played a special and important role in the shaping of the history and culture of the Arab World. The Christians from the Fertile Crescent in particular played a prominent role, for they were among the first to convert to Christianity and actively promulgate its teachings. As is commonly known, and attested in Acts 2:11 and Galatians 1:17 in the New Testament, Arab Nabateans were among the first converts to Christianity. Furthermore, the designation "Christian" was first adopted by followers of Christ in Antioch. Hence the Christians of the Arab World today are an autochthon (indigenous) community with deep and firmly established pre-Islamic roots. The Arab World is the birthplace of Christianity. This is a fact that all the peoples of the region identify as an integral part of their heritage, in much the same way that they identify with the legacies of Judaism and Islam, regardless of their particular religious convictions.

Another important aspect of Arab Christianity is its independence from Western churches. From the earliest days of Christianity, Arab Christians were free from their control. As a result, most were able to act according to their own religious inclinations and play an active and independent role in the formation and development of the Arab-Islamic caliphate.

Arab Christians contributed a great deal in various fields of Arab-Islamic civilisation. The extent and importance of their influence is illustrated by the existence of the five-volume work by the German professor G. Graf entitled "The History of the Arab Christians reference."

It is, nevertheless, correct to refer to the Arab World as being Islamic, in spite of the contribution of Christian and other religious and linguistic communities in the region. In order to understand this we need to define what is meant by the term "Islamic."

Islam, like other religions, has influenced people in two distinct ways. The first is purely religious and thus confined to Muslims, whether of Arabic or other linguistic backgrounds. The second sphere of influence is traditional and this extends to all people living in a Muslim-dominated



Dr. Saleh Hamarneh

society, regardless of their respective beliefs. Islam, therefore, plays a fundamental role in the formation of the customs and attitudes of all Arabs, including members of Christian denominations in the Arab World. For this reason it is correct to describe both religious communities as participants in Islamic culture.

On these grounds, one might argue that the term "Islamic" is sufficient to describe the culture of the Arabs. We cannot, however, attribute the character of this civilisation only to the influence of the Islamic religion. The culture of the Arabic-speaking world is an old one that has its roots in the civilisation of the Semitic people who inhabited these parts of the world long before the advent of Islam. "Islamic" must therefore be hyphenated to the term "Arab" in order to properly describe the culture of the Arab-Islamic world.

To whom the term "Arabic" refers is a matter also in need of clarification. Mohammad, the Prophet, himself answered this question in an address to his followers where he said: "O people! Not one of you is an Arab by virtue of his father or mother, but rather by his tongue-his language. Therefore, whosoever speaks Arabic is an Arab."

We will now attempt to understand how Arab Christians managed to survive in an Arab-Islamic society; not only did they survive, they were fully

integrated as well. They supported the caliphate and took an active part in the various aspects of society in the Islamic state. There existed a mutual tolerance and cooperation that can be better understood in light of the common theological basis of Christianity and Islam and the shared aspects of their community life.

1. Christians and Muslims share a belief in One God, the creator of heavens and of the earth. They also share a belief in the prophets, which is a very central concept in both faiths. Perhaps the most simple and eloquent example of the harmony of Christian and Islamic teachings is the principle commonly known as "The Golden Rule" (quotation from the Bible and the Koran):

From the Koran: "And nearest among them in the Lord To the Believers wilt thou find those who say, 'We are Christian'; because amongst these are men devoted to Learning and Men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant." Ma'ida: 82

From the Holy Bible: "Honour your father and your mother, and You shall love your neighbour as yourself." Matthew 19:19

2. All Arabs, whether Muslim or Christian, began to feel a new sense of self-confidence with the spread of Islam and the establishment of the caliphate. Arabs had previously been governed by numerous foreign powers but with the spread

of Islam they began to build on autonomous state of their own. This new confidence resulted in a feeling of unity among the Arabs, in spite of their differences.

3. Tolerance towards other faiths is a fundamental principle of Islam. It is a religion that accepts people of other beliefs within the framework of the Muslim state, particularly the Christians and the Jews. The following quote from the Koran defines the position of Islam in relation to other communities: "If thy Lord had so willed, He could have made mankind one people; but they will not cease to dispute." We should remember, however, that the stance of Islam is not always the stance of those claiming to be its adherents. A well-known example of this tolerance is the flourishing of the Jews in Spain under the caliphate rule.

The nature of the eastern Christian communities as distinct entities had a significant influence on the society that surrounded it. They were divided by many theological controversies from the very outset of Christianity until the advent of Islam. These disputes destroyed the original simplicity of Christianity, described so eloquently in the words of Christ: "I am as simple as a dove." These disputes constituted a strong juxtaposition to the clear and relatively simple doctrinal teachings of Islam. This contributed to the successful spread of Islam to many parts of the Arab World.

Arab Christians submitted easily to their Muslim conquerors and in many cases welcomed the new rulers of the region. Islam came to Eastern communities, ruled by the Byzantine empire, promising peace and security to peoples who were at that time suffering from oppression, tyranny and great financial burdens. The alternative system offered by the caliphate state provided those regions with a government much lighter in its demands on its subject. In the words of Bishop Usqut/Nestour after the conquest of Damascus, "In truth, those Arabs whom God has now given power... do not fight the Christian religion, but rather defend our freedom to practice and respect our clergy and offer assistance to the churches and monasteries" (Qirir ta dadiyyeh, page 147).

Very shortly after the conquests of Islam, it became

obvious that the Arabs of Syria and Mesopotamia, the majority of whom were Christians, stood firmly on the side of their Muslim conquerors. They took active part in the workings of the new system — the caliphate. It should be noted that under the Omayyads, the Abbasids and the Fatimids, Christians were left in their jobs and positions. We read in Maqrizi that every bureau had Christian employees and most of the scribes of Syria and Egypt were Christians. Neither was the participation of Christians in the caliphate state limited to simple jobs, as is commonly held, but extended to higher positions as well, including those of ministers in the caliphate. It is even possible to suggest that the caliphate depended quite heavily on the Christians of Syria, for their culture was highly developed in comparison with those of the rest of the Middle East. For example, the first Omayyad caliph, Mu'awwiyah, put the Christian Sarjun family in the highest positions of the caliphate; Mansur Bin Sarjun was his secretary and he remained in this position even when Mu'awwiyah was succeeded by 'Abdel-Malik Bin Marwan. Mansur Bin Sarjun's son and grandson, also in the seventh century AD, became famous for his stand against the Icon movement. He later worked in the position of secretary and the latter became the famous John of Damascus. Born in Damascus, he became a monk and dedicated himself to the Christian theology until he died in the Monastery of Saba, in Jerusalem, in 760 AD. The fact that he was a very enlightened man with a deep understanding of both the Christian heritage, and Islam, not to mention his own Arabic-Christian background and good relations with the Omayyad court, made him a pioneer in the Christian-Islamic relations.

Other important Christians under Mu'awwiyah include Bin-Athab, his personal physician and governor of Hama; the celebrated al-Taghalabi Al-Akhtal, his court poet who came from a well-known Christian family and was known to wear the cross. Mu'awwiyah also conscripted his soldiers from among the Syrians. As a result, his army was named th'Jaish ash-Sham" (the Army of Syria). The Syrians, and therefore the Christians, were pillars of his caliphate.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of Christians in the Islamic culture was in the field of translation. This was important because it represented the first step and the key for the Arabic-Islamic world to all the other sciences. Obviously, the majority of translators from Syrian and Greek into Arabic were Christians. Among the first was Stefan the Great who worked for Prince Khaled Bin Yazid, grandson of Mu'awwiyah. Translation into Arabic continued actively during the Omayyad period and into the Abbasid dynasty until the Caliph Ma'mun, who established the Darul-Hikma in Baghdad. This was an academy of science and translation with which many great scientists, translators and commentators were associated. Perhaps the most famous of these was Hunain Bin Ishaq Al-'Abbadi who was a scholar/translator of Christian faith who reputedly knew four languages. Bin Khlikan, the great bibliographer of the 7th century A.H. reportedly expressed surprise that a man of such genius had not accepted Islam.

We learn much about the Christians of the Abbasid period from the writings of 'Abu 'Uthman Al-Jahiz (d. 255 A.H.-868/9 A.D.). This writer and philosopher was one of the most famous of the Abbasid community. He managed to record a considerable amount of interesting information about the Arab Christians from that period. From his treatise entitled ar-Radd ala an-Nasari (A Reply to the Christians), we learn that the Christians formed a middle, and even upper-middle class of doctors, goldsmiths, writers and merchants and generally played an active role in the Islamic society.

What makes them (the Christians) great in the eyes of the common people and beloved among the lower classes is that among them are the scribes of the leaders, the firashi (home secretary) of the kings, the doctors of the nobles, druggists, sarrafa (money changers or some kind of bankers) and merchants... They possess unshakable power, their clothes are cleaner and their products are better. (A Reply to the Christians, p. 303-305).

In spite of the fact that when one of them (the Christians) marries a woman he cannot exchange her for another, nor can he

marry another besides her, nor at-tassari 'alayha (to keep a mistress) they are everywhere and have conquered the nations by virtue of their numbers and abundance of their children. (Ibid).

The fame of the Syrian Nestorians as physicians (in particular the Biktashu family) made Jahiz envious and he condemned the domination of Christians in the medical field in the stinging prose of his well-known book, al-Bukhala' (the people of Avarice). He illustrates the situation for us in a story about a man from Baghdad named 'Asad Bin Jani. He is a well-educated doctor with a good reputation. In spite of this and the fact that Baghdad is suffering from a year of epidemics, he does not have much work. The narrator asks him why this is so and he answers that first, his name is 'Asad — a Muslim name — and not Johana or Saliba (Christian names). His last name, Bin Jani, also indicates that its owner is a Muslim.

On top of this, he wears only cotton, unlike Christians who wear black silk (precious dress). Finally, his mother tongue is Arabic, whereas to be a successful doctor, it should be the language of a graduate from the academy Jundi Sabur.

"... the Christian Arabs are in no way aliens to the Muslim Arab society, a society whose history and culture they have shared for over fourteen centuries."

"Yet Muslims proved to be more tolerant of Arab Christians than the Crusader Knights, in particular the court of Salah ad-Din where Christian Arabs played an active role. The Sultan Salah ad-Din was not merely a man of war but also a patron of knowledge and progress who gathered many great scholars, writers, physicians, poets etc. under his patronage. A good number of those were Christians, like for example Bin Mutram, who was a friend of Salah ad-Din. He was born in Damascus where he studied theology

and later became a physician under the Ayyubids. Many of his manuscripts have survived to the present day.

Another important Christian of the court of Salah ad-Din was Yu'qub Bin Saqlab from Jerusalem, who was fluent in Latin and had worked for many years in a hospital in Jerusalem. Al-Yabrudhi Abu I-faraj was another Christian who came from Saidnaya, a lovely mountain town near Damascus where the majority of the inhabitants were Christian farmers. He himself was a farmer, as well as a doctor at the Ayyubid court. Another doctor and philosopher at the court was the famous Spanish Jew 'Bin Maymun. Among the first and the most important surgeon during the Ayyubid dynasty was the Christian 'Bin al-Qaf al-Karakani an-Nasrani (Christian) who was born in Karak in 1333 AD and who worked in a castle in Ajloun. He later moved to the Ayyubid court in Damascus. He left to posterity two books entitled al-'Umda fi Sina'at-Jiraha (The basics of the surgical profession) and Jami'u'l-Ghard fi Hafadh as-Sihnah (General objectives in health preservation). These two works were edited by Professor Sami Hamarneh and were published by the University of Jordan.

Finally, as I said before, Christians remained a majority in the population of "Bilad Al-Sham" (Great Syria) until the Crusades. These wars brought devastation to the Arab-Islamic nation, including to the Christians of "Bilad Al-Sham", the Eastern Church and especially the Orthodox Church. During this period, the middle class of the Islamic World comprised of mostly Christian people. They were the most economically and culturally dynamic and active class at the time. The fact remains that the Christian Arabs are in no way aliens to the Muslim Arab society, a society whose history and culture they have shared for over fourteen centuries.

The writer is a professor of history at the University of Jordan. He presented the above paper to the fifth international Conference on Christian Arab Studies, which was held at Lund University in Sweden in mid-August.

King calls for international probe

(Continued from page 1)

said earlier that the work "endangers the legitimate aspirations of those who believe in the preservation of Jerusalem as a spiritual citadel and a symbol of hope for future generations."

The comments were some of the harshest Jordan has used against Israel since the two countries signed a peace treaty in October 1994.

The Crown Prince telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on a visit to France, to express fear that the Israeli work had "affected the structure" of Islam's third holiest site.

He reminded the prime minister that "the (Arab-Israeli) agreements prohibit any change in Jerusalem's status," which is to be discussed in "final-status" negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Jordan's peace treaty with Israel recognises the "special role" of the Hashemite Kingdom in administering the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. The Crown Prince pointed out.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, quoted the Israeli premier as promising the Regent that he would give his utmost attention to this question.

Meanwhile, Arab and Islamic ministers of Awqaf who opened a meeting in Amman Wednesday condemned the Israeli actions and praised Jordan's efforts to protect the holy sites and the Arab rights in Palestine. Kuwait's Minister of Awqaf

Ali Ben Fahd Al Zamir said his country "will continue to support the Palestinian people's rights in Jerusalem and in the occupied Arab lands of Palestine."

The minister told reporters: "Kuwait views the Jerusalem issue as one that is of concern to all the Arab and Islamic nations and subject to their special attention."

"We support the Palestinian people's rights in securing their political and administrative rights and we value the Jordanian stand in the face of the recent Israeli measures," added the minister.

Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbad said Israel's opening of the tunnel was an infringement on Arab and Islamic rights in the city.

In a keynote address to the opening session of the third meeting by the executive council of Awqaf ministers in Arab and Islamic countries, Prince Hassan said that Jordan seeks no ambitions for itself in Jerusalem as expressed in its 1994 peace treaty with Israel but that it strives to achieve the restoration of the Arab city with all its holy shrines to Arab and Palestinian sovereignty.

"We are all committed to supporting the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the Islamic Nation in Jerusalem and we believe that any political arrangement in the city will not change our stand nor will it end our commitment to the city," the Regent said.

"For us, as Arabs and

Hashemites, Jerusalem is a symbol of peace for all believers in the one God and hence no single party, in this transitional period, should make any changes in the Holy City whether above or under the ground."

Referring to his telephone conversation with Mr. Netanyahu, the Regent said that the Israeli leader has stressed his intention to reconsider its opening up the tunnel.

"I have told Netanyahu that the Israeli step was, in our view, another link in the long chain of Israeli excavations in Jerusalem in search of Jewish antiquities particularly the Solomon Temple on Al Haram Al Sharif," added Prince Hassan.

Prince Hassan stressed that Arab Jerusalem must remain a symbol of peace for all the followers of the monotheistic religions.

Welcoming the ministers of Awqaf who gathered at the King Abdullah Mosque in Amman, Prince Hassan said their meeting here was yet another "endeavour towards enhancing joint Islamic action to deal with issues common to the Islamic World."

"The continued changes in international relations require from us more than any time in the past to strengthen and promote our Islamic cultural and religious beliefs which should serve as a guide for our confrontation with the challenges and all eventualities at present and in the future and should strengthen our steps and our

abilities in our quest to achieve our noble objectives," Prince Hassan said.

Prince Hassan reiterated a call for the establishment of an international Zakat fund, which, he said, would help Muslim nations to reform their present social and humanitarian systems.

He said that Muslims constitute 70 per cent of the total volume of refugees, migrants and homeless people around the world and this serves as a very serious social challenge for the Islamic countries.

Calling on Muslim nations to cooperate in promoting the living standards of their inhabitants, Prince Hassan said: "Numerous areas exist for cooperation among the Awqaf ministries in these nations, which must exchange expertise, develop their financial resources to carry out humanitarian programmes, cater to the needs of the youth and contribute to the development of the Islamic society."

Prince Hassan referred to mosque preaching and said: "The pulpits should not be exploited for anything except for the call on the worshippers to return to God as the Ulemas are the people who can remove all ambiguities in matters related to religion and faith."

Two Jordanian political parties, meanwhile, issued statements condemning Israel's excavation programmes and described its latest act as a provocation and disregard of the Arab and Islamic feelings.

Father confesses to poisoning

(Continued from page 1)

attached to their mother," Mr. Rawashdeh said.

The mother found the two children collapsed in the apartment when she returned home after giving her husband a ride to work early Sept. 11. She rushed the children to hospital, where they were declared dead.

According to Gen. Moheiddin, police became suspicious of Mr. Masri "because he made contradictory statements during questioning and because of other evidence collected during the investigation."

The police chief said the husband had claimed that he left the house at 6:45 a.m. in the morning in which the crime was committed, but his wife said that he went back to the apartment, leaving her in the car, claiming that he wanted to use the toilet and stayed there for a relatively long time.

Mr. Rawashdeh dismissed suggestion that Mr. Masri had found out, during tests underwent while in Canada, that he could not have children — implying that he was not the biological father of Hanio and Hani — and this could have been the main motive for the murder.

Mr. Rawashdeh said tests established that Mr. Masri was capable of having children.

Mr. Masri had tried earlier to kill the children as well as his wife by leaving a gas bottle open behind the door of the bedroom while they were asleep, according to his wife's testimony to police.

According to police, Mr. Masri also claimed that a woman who lives next door had told him that she saw a hooded man standing in front of the Masris' door on the morning of the murder. "But when we asked the neighbour she denied the story," Gen. Moheiddin said.

"Confronted with these facts, Mr. Masri initially denied killing his children, but later confessed to the prosecutor general," the police chief said.

Mo'men Hadidi, a pathologist who headed the committee which performed an autopsy on the children, said cyanide, which causes respiratory failure and can kill in a matter of minutes, was difficult to purchase in the open market.

Mr. Masri confessed that he planned to kill his children about two months ago and obtained the cyanide pills while in a two-week training course in Canada. He used to give his children vitamins pills daily, and that "on the morning of Sept. 11 he gave them the cyanide pills instead," police said.

Mr. Masri is expected to undergo a psychological test soon to determine

"We want to determine his motives," Dr. Hadidi told the Jordan Times. "We have to study and evaluate his mental condition."

He said it was possible that Mr. Masri was schizophrenic. Colleagues and co-workers at the Information Centre at the Higher Council of Science and Technology (HCST), where Mr. Masri has been employed as computer programmer since Oct. 18, 1994, described him as a hard and devoted worker.

"He is polite and friendly but always kept to himself, and he used to stay late at night working," one colleague said.

Mr. Masri obtained a bachelor's degree in applied engineering from Oklahoma University in the U.S. in 1986. A year later he got married Hiam Hammoudeh, 32, an employee at the Jordan Contractors' Union.

He is expected to face two counts of first-degree murder.

King arrives in Doha

(Continued from page 1)

in their occupied lands."

In reply to another question concerning his recent visit to Saudi Arabia the King said: "It was extremely successful and we had brotherly discussions on various Arab issues. We discussed establishing inter-Arab relations on a solid basis and mutual trust."

On confronting terrorism in Bahrain, he said: "Any act of terrorism directed against our brothers in the Arab World is affecting Jordan and ours is a united stand against terrorism. Whatever harms the Arab brothers harms Jordan and therefore we have full cooperation in combatting terrorism by all available means."

Opposition

Continued from page 1) suffering of the low standards of living, the spread of poverty and the rise in the number of the unemployed."

"Who is really to blame... is it the opposition which is supporting the citizens' rights and protecting the Lower House of Parliament's dignity? Or is it the prime minister who disregarded the House and the views of the majority of its members, even those who

wanted to go half way in supporting the government with the decision to raise prices?"

The opposition statement said it was the opposition which helped absorb the people's fury after the government's decision to lift subsidies and played a key role in controlling damages while the premier was still trying to contain the situation through continuing to arrest those who allegedly caused last month's disturbances, "which were a spontaneous reaction by those harmed by the decision."

'Poverty gap' takes centre stage at annual meeting of U.N. General Assembly

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The growing gap between the world's rich and poor has taken centre stage at the annual U.N. General Assembly, with warnings of dire consequences if more is not done to close the "poverty gap".

More than one billion people, or one-fifth of the world's population, live in poverty — most of them in Africa and parts of Asia. Wealthy countries have been cutting development aid, despite widespread concerns that unchecked poverty will bring more conflict, social unrest and mass migration.

Government leaders and foreign ministers gathered in New York for the annual U.N. General Assembly this week have highlighted the problem and called for urgent action, although with few signs of agreement on how to tackle the problems.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia said the much-vaunted trend toward globalisation in trade and other areas, following the end of the cold war, had brought problems as well as benefits.

He said globalisation had bred "a world which generates prosperity and a healthy competition ... but a world which also swells the ranks of the destitute and the outcast".

Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy said it was time to act after a series of major U.N. conferences on development issues in the last few years, which have produced public pledges to cut poverty but brought few results so far.

"The road map is clear we do not need to study it any further," he told the 185-nation assembly on Tuesday.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa and other

delegates from developing countries complained bitterly that their concerns were being ignored and that the gap between rich and poor countries was widening.

Angolan Foreign Minister Venancio de Moura appealed for major aid and debt relief for Africa, which has been ravaged by war and famine.

"The situation in Africa ... today seems like a corpse where vultures come to feed," he said.

Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind devoted large parts of their speeches to the need for a "new global partnership" between developed and developing nations.

Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring, speaking on behalf of the 15-nation European Union, recalled a U.N. pledge on its 50th

anniversary last year to be of "greater service to ... those who are suffering and deeply deprived".

"Despite decades of efforts and resources, the poverty gap has widened not narrowed ... The time is long overdue to mount a new global offensive against poverty, a major cause of instability and conflict," Mr. Spring said.

Britain's Rifkind said the world's wealthy now enjoyed unprecedented benefits — travel, consumer goods, entertainment and new technology including the Internet.

"But these fruits are denied the vast majority of the planet's population. The number of people who live in absolute poverty is still growing. Their misery is a challenge to all our consciences," he said.

Mr. Rifkind said greater trade opportunities for developing nations, more

private investment, less protectionism and more debt relief would help alleviate the problems.

But Denmark, one of the world's biggest aid donors, said the poorest nations would get little or no private investment and had little potential to benefit from trade.

Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen castigated wealthy nations for cutting development aid, saying the fall in official development assistance was "deplorable".

In 1995, such assistance averaged just 0.27 per cent of gross national product, the lowest level since the United Nations first set a target of more than twice that level in 1970. Only four countries in the world, Denmark among them, had exceeded that U.N. target last year, Mr. Petersen said.

U.S. may contribute to IMF drive to aid world's poor

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has signalled its willingness to consider contributing to stepped-up efforts by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help the world's poorest nations, monetary sources have said.

But Washington has indicated that such a move would be contingent upon IMF agreement on a controversial proposal to sell some fund gold for the same purpose.

A Treasury Department spokeswoman, ... declined comment on the apparent shift in the U.S. position. Washington in the past had seemed to rule out the possibility of contributing directly to the drive to aid the world's poor.

Any U.S. contribution would be small, likely less than \$300 million, and be subject to consultations with, and approval by, a tight-fisted U.S. Congress, sources said.

But it would still be significant because it would encourage other nations to kick in money to help finance a continuation of the IMF's enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF) and its participation in a multilateral debt relief initiative for poor countries.

ESAF, which lends money at virtually no interest charge to the world's poorest countries, faces a roughly \$3.5 billion financing gap from the years 2000 to 2004.

The IMF board last week pledged to find the money needed to fill that gap, but stepped short of spelling out where it would come from.

IMF management, backed by the United States, Britain and most other member nations, had proposed selling up to five million of the fund's 104 million ounces of gold if needed to help finance the stepped-up assistance to poor countries.

But a few nations — Germany, Italy and Switzerland

— opposed the proposal, arguing in part that the IMF should not sell gold except in cases of extreme financial emergency.

The sources, who declined to be identified, said there was broad support on the IMF board for the sale of gold. But it was not clear whether IMF management had the necessary 85 per cent majority to approve the proposal as no vote was taken.

Rather than deciding now whether to sell gold, the IMF opted to first ask member nations to try to fill the ESAF financing gap.

Much of those contributions could come — either directly or indirectly — from a special account already set up at the IMF to help borrowing nations who had fallen behind in their loan repayments to the fund.

That account, which contains some \$1.5 billion but which will build over time,

will no longer be needed in the next century because the arrears problem will be cleared up.

It has been financed by creditor nations — via the money earned by investing their contributions to the IMF — and debtor nations — via the interest charged on fund loans.

Opponents of gold sales are hoping that the bilateral contributions will be enough to fill the ESAF financing gap, obviating the need for the sale of gold.

But supporters argue that

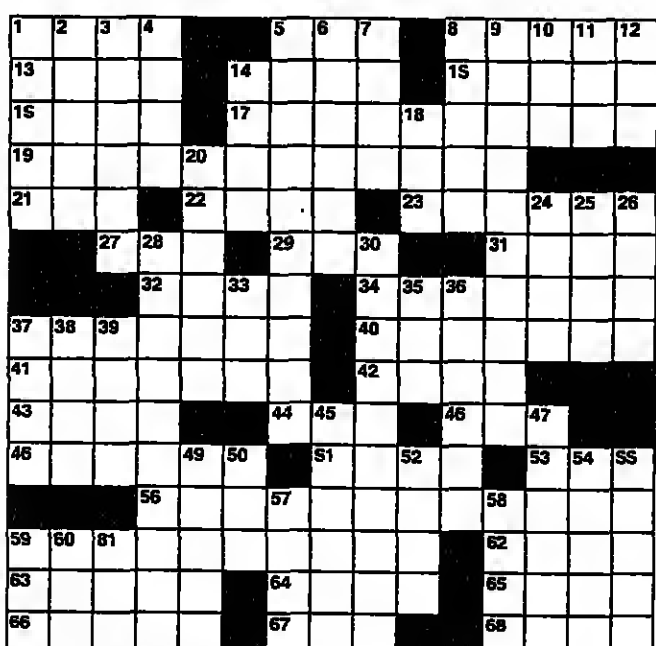
gold sales will be needed because the bilateral contributions will fall short. By making its possible contribution contingent on gold sales, the United States looks to be trying to ensure that some gold is sold.

One source said a decision on gold sales may not occur until the year 2000, when the final tally of bilateral contributions will be known. What might eventually happen, another added, is that the IMF does sell some gold but much less than the five million ounces first envisaged.

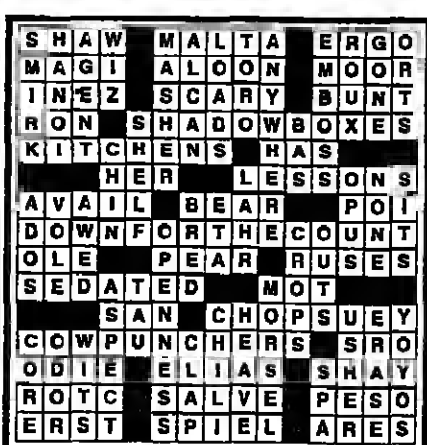
THE Daily Crossword by Anthony R. Mupo

ACROSS

- 1 Org.
- 5 Blubber
- 8 Pursuing
- 13 Sightless trio?
- 14 Waiter's offering
- 15 Strainer
- 16 Taj Mahal site
- 17 Cover a surface
- 19 Heavy interrogations
- 21 Dogma
- 22 Wine prefix
- 23 Hymn
- 27 Cpl. subordinate
- 29 QB's stat
- 31 Salad cheese
- 32 Have a desire
- 34 Rivet
- 37 Shellfish
- 40 Carina star
- 41 Former Italian colony
- 42 Norse seaport
- 43 Bible book: abh.
- 44 Craving
- 46 Speech hesitations
- 48 Save a loafer?
- 51 Appendix
- 53 Pava
- 56 Press
- 59 Surgical antiseptic
- 62 Over
- 63 Atmospheres
- 64 Tree
- 65 Feature of 64A
- 66 Victims
- 67 Put a stop to
- 68 Russian city



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DOWN

- 1 Violin name
- 2 Breathless responses
- 3 Economiza
- 4 Almost
- 5 Adventist laad-in
- 6 Monotheism basis
- 7 Jefferson V.P.
- 8 Colorado resort
- 9 Elevator stop
- 10 Driving necessity
- 11 Ms. LeGallienne
- 12 Danger color
- 14 Way
- 18 Vast amount
- 20 Tampar with
- 24 Mound
- 25 "Brute?"
- 26 West and Murray
- 28 Tammy Wynette's birthday
- 30 Indirectly
- 33 Famous milar
- 35 Family members
- 36 Except
- 37 Soothsayer
- 38 Gaelic
- 39 River islets
- 45 Dinas at home
- 47 Dynamo part
- 49 Wind-blown soil
- 50 N. of Afr.
- 52 Printer's mark
- 54 Make reparation
- 55 Cause distasta
- 57 — in (lure)
- 58 Fried tortilla
- 59 FBI "ear"
- 60 Ben —
- 61 Fury

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 27, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Bring your talents to the attention of influential people today and gain support and prestige which you desire. Protect your interests later this evening and you can thereby gain the assistance of a bigwig.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Be alert to whatever is happening around you today and seize fine opportunity to advance at this time. Later this evening will be good for you to consult with a knowledgeable person concerning your career activities.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Give some attention today to your mate which will be appreciated and will be reciprocated back in increased affection by him or her. Make the right arrangements later this evening to go out on the town with close friends.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Contact fellow associates today who are most practical in their thinking and can make your career activities quite successful. This is a good time later this evening to gain greater prestige in the outside world.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You can labour most productively today so don't waste a moment's time at any constructive endeavors. Later this evening you can go out on the town with loved ones and have a good time with recreations which are fun.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is a good day today to plan the amusements which you like so that you can enjoy them any time and day. Later this evening can be quite beneficial if you seek out the advice of a knowledgeable person which is resourceful.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You have been planning to make changes at home today, so start at this time and you can make your residence a place to invite close friends to relax and be comfortable. Have a happy evening with fellow associates.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Contact those persons who can assist you today in your career activities. Be sure to answer important letter later this evening, especially if they concern any information inquiries from those in authority who are of assistance.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Financial and other practical matters should be put first today since they can make you quite successful in the days ahead. Be charming and polite to fellow associates who have offered to assist you with a current project.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You feel sure of yourself today and you can gain whatever you sincerely wish of a personal nature. Later this evening will be good for obtaining information concerning a new project which is important to your success.

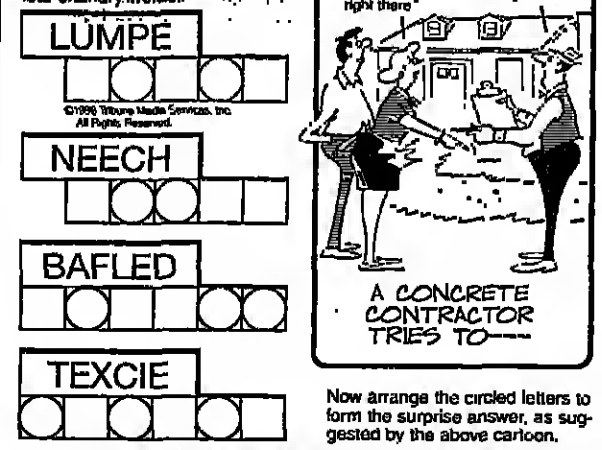
AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Stop all that daydreaming today and get right down to the brass tacks of career activities which have been put aside for some time. Plan personal aims quietly later this evening and say nothing until you are sure of the outcome.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Do whatever will please the one you love tonight and thereby you will gain much affection from him or her. Today is the day that you can truly be happy together, so long as there isn't any difficulties in your lives.

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argillon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: _____ THE _____

Yesterday's Jumbles: AGLOW JOKER ASSAIL PEPTIC

Answer: A reckless driver seldom is this — WRECK-LESS

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Don't get depressed today if annoying matters develop at your career activities. Don't lose your composure or you could find yourself in a difficult situation which can be interpreted as not being successful.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Plan your time well today to take every advantage of information provided to you by some knowledgeable person. Transfer personal matters to the evening and handle them wisely at this time so there won't be any difficulty.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can make big headway in the outside world today, so don't permit home affairs to deter your progress. Later this evening will be quite beneficial if you seek out the advice of a knowledgeable person concerning tasks.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Come to a better understanding with a fellow associate and thereby you can eliminate any difficulties. Try not to get excited later this evening concerning your career activities and take it easy in the days ahead.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Plan time to soothe a good close friend today who is having difficulties with domestic affairs, however, don't get so involved that you neglect your own career activities. Tonight take time for romance and happiness with your mate.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Study whatever is occurring at home today so that you can overt any difficulties which could be present. Straighten out these affairs for the better. Later this evening try to please your loved ones and thereby enjoy their company.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You may get news today which is disturbing, however, cooperation from close friends can make things better. Don't take risks later this evening with your reputation or you could find yourself in quite a difficulty.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) After a busy day today, seek a delightful close friend who has suggestions for some fun activities. You can gain long-term wishes with relative ease if you follow the advice of a knowledgeable person who is successful.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Try not to criticize one today who is influential or you could find yourself in quite a difficult position. Show your real ability to those in authority and that you are quite capable to handle any career oriented situation in the days ahead.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Don't get into a new outlet today which could cause you to lose out with a project you have been labouring on for sometime. Later this evening will be good for plan recreational activities with your close friends.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't try to force some personal pleasure on your loved ones or close friends or you could find yourself in a difficult position. See important people you know later this evening and gain a favour which can be productive.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Don't disagree with superiors today or you could lose out materially where it truly counts. A personal desire can be gained tonight if you have thoroughly considered every angle of your career activities in the days ahead.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli.

IDB lends JD8.8m to 26 projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) Wednesday approved 26 loans amounting to JD 8.8 million to finance several industrial and tourism projects in different parts of the Kingdom.

Sixty per cent of the amount will go to 11 tourism projects and 40 per cent will go to 15 industrial projects.

The loans to finance industrial projects will be spent on purchasing new machines. Such industrial projects will provide 800 job opportunities.

The loans to finance tourism projects will go to construct new hotels.

By the end of September 1996, the IDB will have granted 121 loans totalling JD31 million.

Malaysian delegation hold talks with Jordanian businessmen

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Malaysian delegation representing Jawhar State Chamber of Trade Wednesday met with Jordanian businessmen at the Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA).

JBA President Hamdi Tabbaa called for establishing joint ventures in the field of electronics to provide the Jordanian market and the neighbouring countries with such products.

Mr. Tabbaa also briefed the delegation of the investment climate in Jordan and the new regulations taken by the government to facilitate investment opportunities in the Kingdom.

Head of the Malaysian delegation, Ali Mohammad Al Attas, voiced his country's desire to forge good economic relations with Jordan and welcomed the Jordanian expertise in Malaysia.

Later, the Malaysian delegation toured the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation and were briefed by its Director General Assem Hindawi on the Jordanian experience in establishing industrial cities and the important role such cities play in developing the Jordanian economy.

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The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.5115	0.8333	1.2344	110.30	1.3858	1513.00	1.8947	5.1138
DE Mark	0.6616	1.0000	0.4226	0.8164	72.97	0.9034	1000.73	1.2121	3.3857
GB Sterling	1.5643	2.3900	1.0000	1.9308	172.41	2.1365	2366.83	2.6506	7.9985
CH Franc	0.9101	1.2234	0.5172	1.0000	99.37	1.1058	1225.30	137.24	4.1405
JP Yen	0.0091	1.3689	0.5769	1.1183	1.0000	1.2374	13.71	153.58	4.6342
CA Dollar	0.7322	1.1035	0.4696	0.9052	1.24	1.0000	1115.32	1.2368	3.7681
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9980	0.4220	0.0815	137.63	0.9021	1.0000	11.19	3.3788
NL Guilder	0.5901	0.9915	0.3787	0.7281	85.05	0.6053	892.10	1.0000	3.0180
FR Franc	0.1958	0.2953	0.1248	0.2423	21.55	0.2870	33.12	33.1200	1.0000

Energy			Mid-East Currencies					
Oils	Last	Previous	Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
Brent	23.35	23.55	SA Riyal	0.2656	0.4032	0.17046	0.32941	28.4325
W. Texas	24.25	24.50	AE Dirham	0.2723	0.41168	0.17405	0.33638	30.0526
Bony	23.35	23.55	KW Dinar	3.3389	5.04798	2.13447	4.12541	386.598
Dubai	20.70	20.31	BH Dinar	0.3770	0.41123	0.16878	0.327654	292.828
U.L. Gas	198.00	194.00	CY Pound	2.1558	3.2567	1.3773	2.6609	237.948

Metal Prices			Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)						
Metal	Unit	Price	Change	Period	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year	
Gold (oz)		382.3	382.8	USD	5.31	5.37	5.58	5.78	5.86
Silver (oz)		4.91	4.93	GBP	5.75	5.80	5.71	5.80	5.82
Platinum (oz)		387.5	388.5	JPY	0.38	0.38	0.43	0.48	0.65
AL (3 Months)	#N/A DR	N/A DR	N/A DR	DEM	2.68	2.98	3.00	3.09	3.15
CU (3 Months)	#N/A OR	N/A OR	N/A OR	FRF	3.44	3.47	3.59	3.61	3.71
Zinc (3 Months)	#N/A OR	N/A OR	N/A OR	CHF	1.25	1.31	1.40	1.75	1.62
Lead (3 Months)	#N/A OR	N/A OR	N/A OR	ITL	6.14	6.11	6.02	7.67	7.61
NI (3 Months)	#N/A DR	N/A DR	N/A DR						

Main Equity Indices							
Source	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Prc Ch
New Yrk	DOW JONES	5882.56	-11.47	-0.2	5895.11	5867.08	5874.03
New York	S&P 500	685.34	-0.27	-0.04	688.26	685.07	685.81
London	FT-SE 100	3935.3	24.8	0.63	3938.8	3917.7	3910.5
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	21350.67	178.68	0.84	21350.7	21150.2	21172.7
Paris	CAC 40	2103.41	21.91	1.05	2109.89	2086.84	2081.5
Frankfurt	DAX	2656.97	20.52	0.78	2659.56	2649.39	2638.45

Energy			JOD Cross Rates		
Commodity	Last	Delivery	Currency	Buy	Sell
Coffee (c/lbs)	112.5	Spot	US Dollar	0.7078	0.7101
Cocoa (S/ton)	1416	Spot	GB Sterling	1.0621	1.0641
Sugar (S/ton)	335	Spot	DE Mark	0.4701	0.4725
Wheat (S/ton)	152	Spot	CH Franc	0.5758	0.5787
Soya (c/lbs)	23.74	Spot	FR Franc	0.1388	0.1395
Ten (sp/kg)	120	Spot	JP Yen	0.00444	0.00446
Barley (S/bsh)	2.75	Spot	NL Guilder	0.4191	0.4212
Rice (S/bsh)	465	Spot	IT Lira	0.00464	0.00467

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI									
البنك العقاري - عمان - شمساني									
COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE		
1.330 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
2.700 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
3.310 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
4.043 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
5.240 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
6.380 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
7.480 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
8.820 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
9.160 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
10.320 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
11.480 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
12.640 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
13.800 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
14.960 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
16.120 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
17.280 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
18.440 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
19.600 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
20.760 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
21.920 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
23.080 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
24.240 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
25.400 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
26.560 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
27.720 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
28.880 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
29.040 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
30.200 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
31.360 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
32.520 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
33.680 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
34.840 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
36.000 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
37.160 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
38.320 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
39.480 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
40.640 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
41.800 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
42.960 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
44.120 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
45.280 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
46.440 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
47.600 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
48.760 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
49.920 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
51.080 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
52.240 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
53.400 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
54.560 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
55.720 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
56.880 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
58.040 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
59.200 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
60.360 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
61.520 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
62.680 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
63.840 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
65.000 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
66.160 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
67.320 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
68.480 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
69.640 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
70.800 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
71.960 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
73.120 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
74.280 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
75.440 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
76.600 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
77.760 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
78.920 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
80.080 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
81.240 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
82.400 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
83.560 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
84.720 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
85.880 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
87.040 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
88.200 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
89.360 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
90.520 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
91.680 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
92.840 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
94.000 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
95.160 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
96.320 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
97.480 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
98.640 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
99.800 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
100.960 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
102.120 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
103.280 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
104.440 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
105.600 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
106.760 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
107.920 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
109.080 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
110.240 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
111.400 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
112.560 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
113.720 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
114.880 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
116.040 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
117.200 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
118.360 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
119.520 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
120.680 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
121.840 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
123.000 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
124.160 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
125.320 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
126.480 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
127.640 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
128.800 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
129.960 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
131.120 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
132.280 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
133.440 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
134.600 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
135.760 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
136.920 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
138.080 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
139.240 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
140.400 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
141.560 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
142.720 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
143.880 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
145.040 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
146.200 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
147.360 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
148.520 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
149.680 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
150.840 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
152.000 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
153.160 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
154.320 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
155.480 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
156.640 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
157.800 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
158.960 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
160.120 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
161.280 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
162.440 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
163.600 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
164.760 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
165.920 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
167.080 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
168.240 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
169.400 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		
170.560 LEB	15.5	0.00	10000	12395	1.17	1.13	-0.04		



Mike Tyson

Tyson relinquishes WBC heavyweight title

TOTOWA, New Jersey (AP) — Mike Tyson has relinquished his WBC heavyweight championship rather than face No. 1 contender Lennox Lewis, promoters Dino Duva and Panos Eliades said Tuesday.

Duva and Eliades said a purse bid for a championship fight between Lewis and No. 2 contender Oliver McColl will be held Thursday. Eliades and Duva, who runs main events, copromote Lewis.

"We are disappointed and surprised that Tyson decided to give up the title instead of fighting Lennox," Duva said. "The heavy-weight championship is one of the most valued possessions in sports."

"For Tyson to just throw it away like this is incredible. I thought he was a warrior. I was wrong."

According to Eliades, Tyson gave up the WBC title as soon as he stopped Bruce Seldon to win the WBA championship ear-

lier this month. That was one of the terms of a binding contract signed by both sides.

Eliades said Tyson and promoter Don King agreed to give up the title as part of a deal in which Lewis also accepted a \$4 million compensation payment to step aside. Now King is lining up a WBA defence against Evander Holyfield in November, followed by a challenge for Michael Moore's IBF title.

Lewis became the mandatory challenger for the WBC title in May 1995 by defeating Lionel Butler in an ordered elimination bout.

"Lennox has waited patiently for his opportunity to regain the title," Eliades said. "We have preferred to challenge Tyson for the title, but he did not want the fight."

Tyson took the WBC title from Frank Bruno in March.



Alberto Tomba

Italy's most successful skier suggests part-time engagement

MILAN (AP) — World and Olympic champion Alberto Tomba suggested a part-time engagement in the upcoming World Cup ski season.

In an interview with the Italian Television Network RAI, which was aired Tuesday, Tomba said he was considering the possibility to start only in the most prestigious World Cup events, such as the Slaloms and Giant Slaloms at Madonna Di Campiglio, Sestriere, Alta Badia, Kitzbuehel and Wengen.

Tomba's part-time season still would be capped by the world championships of Alpine skiing, scheduled on his favourite

courses at Sestriere next February.

The 29-year-old Italian, often critical of the overly crowded 36-race World Cup programme, said he will make soon a final decision about the events to run.

Italy's most successful skier said that his mother has been strongly pressing for his retirement "while my father is pushing on the opposite direction."

Tomba, who would be a defending Slalom and Giant Slalom champion at the next world championships in Sestriere, is known to have signed commercial contracts of about \$6 million a year.

IOC says Sydney must solve transport problem

SYDNEY (R) — Olympic inspectors said on Wednesday that transport would be a major challenge for the organisers of the Sydney Games, but they were confident that the city could avoid the kind of problems seen in Atlanta.

After a three-day visit to the 2000 Olympic host city, members of the International Olympic Committee coordination commission said they were satisfied with preparations so far and pleased to see the state government closely involved with the Games.

Commission chairman Jacques Rogge listed various problems, however, including transport, accommodation, and even the possibility that indigenous aborigines or other ethnic minorities could try to "take the Games hostage."

"It's not a boney moon, but the problems we've analysed can all be overcome," Rogge told a news conference.

The total number of spectators is expected to be much lower than in Atlanta, where stories abounded of untrained, out-of-town bus drivers getting lost and athletes having to hijack buses to get to venues.

But hundreds of thousands of people will travel everyday to the western suburb of Homebush, where most of the Olympic venues, including a new 110,000-seat stadium, are being built.

On the busiest day of the Games, the second Saturday, up to half a million people are expected to use either buses, ferries or a new train link to Homebush.

Rogge welcomed Sydney's decision to move the Olympic velodrome away from Homebush to cut back on crowds and said some events would have to be rescheduled to reduce peak-hour traffic.

Aborigines and other ethnic minorities have

threatened to use street protests during the Games to draw attention to their poor living conditions.

Australia's 300,000 aborigines have a life expectancy that is as much as 20 years lower than that of white Australians.

Rogge said groups always tried to exploit the Olympics for publicity but Sydney Games organisers had "no responsibilities for Australia's long-term problems."

Sydney Games organisers also announced that Spaniard Manolo Romero had been appointed chief executive of its host broadcasting operation, which will provide the bulk of worldwide television coverage of the Games.

Romero headed the host broadcasting operations at the Los Angeles Olympics of 1984, at Barcelona in 1992 and in Atlanta this year. He has also handled two soccer World Cups.

Rangers move closer to Al West title

OAKLAND (AP) — Mickey Tettleton hit a two-run homer and Dean Palmer added a two-run single as the Texas Rangers reduced their magic number in the AL West to four with a 7-3 victory Tuesday over the Athletics.

The Rangers began the day with a two-game lead over the Seattle Mariners, who played at California on Tuesday night.

Texas finished 3-6 on a west coast swing, its last road trip of the regular season. The Rangers headed home after the game for a four-game series against California that starts Thursday.

The Rangers finished the season 40-41 on the road, having lost seven of their last 10 road games. It marked Texas' fourth straight losing road record, and the 21st in 25 years for the Rangers.

Tettleton's 24th homer of the season broke a 1-1 tie in the fourth. Palmer's two-run single came in a three-run fifth. Rusty Greer added an RBI double in the sixth. Juan Gonzalez had singled in a run in the first.

Konyshov wins 18th stage in Tour of Spain

ZARAGOZA (AFP) — Russia's Dimitri Konyshov won Wednesday's 219km 18th stage of the Tour of Spain but Switzerland's Alex Zülle retained the overall lead.

Konyshov, who made a break midway through with Italians Gianni Bugno, Odoardo Valtori and Denmark's Bo Hamburger, sprinted first across the line more than four minutes ahead of the pack in this stage from Benasque to Zaragoza.

Stomach problems amongst Once riders may cause problems in the run-in to the event but sporting director Manolo Saiz refused to reveal the extent of the problems. The team's ill effects began the day before on the final climb at Ampuri where Zülle felt unwell and Spain's Alberto Leanzabarrutia pulled out.



Los Angeles Dodgers' Eric Karros (left) is put out at second base by San Francisco Giants' Bill Mueller in the first inning in Los Angeles. Karros hit a RBI single, which he tried to stretch into a double. Los Angeles won 6-2 (Reuters photo)

Cardinals clinch Central title with win over Pirates

PITTSBURGH (R) — The St. Louis Cardinals clinched their first division title in nine years with a 7-1 victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates behind two RBI apiece from Brian Jordan and Luis Alica on Tuesday.

Under first-year manager Tony La Russa, the Cardinals clinched the National League Central Division for their first division crown since 1987, when they won the NL East and reached the world series.

"When you think of all the newness, this club came together quickly," Cardinals manager Tony La Russa said. "It would have been easy to say that we'll learn a little bit and come together next year, but the guys made it a point to jell as soon as possible."

In Cincinnati, Willie Greene hit three home runs and drove in a career-high five runs as the Cincinnati Reds built a four-run lead on the way to a 6-3 victory over the Chicago Cubs.

"It felt good," said Greene. "I had three in Triple-A but it in the big leagues is exciting. I wasn't thinking about it the third time up. When I think about it, I either strike out or pop up."

In Philadelphia, Rondell White had two hits and two RBI and Jeff Juden allowed one run in three innings of relief as the Montreal Expos snapped a four-game losing streak with a 6-2 victory over the Philadelphia Phillies.

The Expos temporarily moved within two games of the San Diego Padres for the National League wild-card berth. Juden (0-5), a former Phillie, allowed three hits, walked one and struck out four.

At Florida, Pat Rapp allowed one run over five innings and Devon White drove in three runs as the Florida Marlins routed the

Major League standings

AMERICAN LEAGUE				
Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
New York	89	67	.571	—
Baltimore	85	72	.541	4 1/2
Boston	82	75	.522	7 1/2
Toronto	71	86	.452	18 1/2
Detroit	53	105	.335	37

Central Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Y-Cleveland	97	60	.618	—
Chicago	84	74	.532	13 1/2
Milwaukee	77	80	.490	20
Minnesota	76	82	.481	21 1/2
Kansas City	72	85	.459	25

Western Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Texas	87	71	.551	—
Seattle	83	73	.532	3
Oakland	69	87	.442	17
California	69	87	.442	17

NATIONAL LEAGUE				
Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Y-Atlanta	94	63	.599	—
Montreal	86	71	.548	8
Florida	80	77	.510	17
New York	70	87	.446	24
Philadelphia	64	93	.408	30

Central Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Y-St Louis	85	73	.538	—
Houston	78	79	.497	6 1/2
Cincinnati	78	79	.497	6 1/2
Chicago	75	81	.481	9
Pittsburgh	70	87	.446	14 1/2

Western Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Los Angeles	89	68	.567	—
San Diego	88	70	.557	1 1/2
Colorado	81	77	.513	8 1/2
San Francisco	65	92	.414	24

Y-Clinched division title

National League East Division champion Atlanta Braves 12-1.

Rapp (8-16) surrendered an RBI single to Ed Giovannola in the fourth

Steve Avery (8-8), who did not survive the inning.

"I felt as good as I looked," said Avery. "If I throw like that, I don't expect to be in the playoffs. Tonight I couldn't get a guy out in the class a playoffs."

In Houston, Bobby Jones fired a four-hitter for his first shutout of the season and four different players drove in runs as the New York Mets handed the Houston Astros their ninth straight loss 4-0.

Jones (12-8) walked two and struck out three in his third complete game of the season and third career shutout.

In Los Angeles, Ramon Martinez allowed two runs over seven innings for his seventh straight win as the Los Angeles Dodgers defeated the San Francisco Giants 6-2 to maintain their lead atop the National League West.

The win gives the Dodgers a 1-1/2 game lead over the San Diego in the final three games of the season this weekend.

Martinez (15-6) allowed two hits, walked six and struck out six as he improved to 21-6 since last July both.

In San Diego, Dante Bichette's solo homer off Trevor Hoffman with one out in the 11th inning lifted the Colorado Rockies past the San Diego Padres, 5-4.

Combined with the Dodgers' win earlier, San Diego fell 1 1/2 games behind Los Angeles for the lead in the National League West with four games left. The loss also cut San Diego's lead in the wild card race to 1 1/2 games over the Expos.

TOUR OF SPAIN	CINEMA TEL:634144 PHILADELPHIA Chris Farley & David Spade... in TOMMY BOY Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:699238 PLAZA The Arab Cinema Surprise Ahmad Zakiin NASER 56 (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:45, 11:00	CINEMA TEL:677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" Arnold Schwarzenegger & Vanessa Williams...in ERASER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" SPEED Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Ammoun Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274-618275 Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimah & Hussein Tubishat Play starts 8:30 p.m.	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights At 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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Feyenoord defender George Boateng (right) duels for the ball with Russian CSKA Moscow striker Lenardo during their first round second leg UEFA Cup match. Feyenoord won their match on aggregate with 2-1 (Reuters photo)

Russia holds onto Chess Olympiad lead

YEREVAN, Armenia (AP) — Russia maintained its lead Tuesday in the World Chess Olympiad despite team leader Garry Kasparov's draw with Spanish player Alexei Shirov.

In the eighth of the Olympiad's 14 rounds, Russia beat Spain 2.5-1.5, and now has 23.5 points. Kasparov, the world's top-ranked player, had his fourth draw at the Olympiad.

The Bulgarian team defeated Uzbekistan 3-1 and shares second place with Spain. Both teams have 21 points.

Four teams — Georgia, Hungary, Armenia's first team and the United States were tied for third place with 20.5 points each. As host country, Armenia fields two teams.

Women's results:
Ukraine 1.5, Romania 1.5
Yugoslavia 1.5, England 1.5
Poland 3, Bulgaria 0
Germany 2.5, Moldova 0.5
Georgia 3, Hungary 0
China 2.5, Russia 0.5
Israel 2, Kazakhstan 1
Greece 1.5, Armenia (first team) 1.5
Vietnam 1.5, Slovakia 1.5

Men's results:
Russia 2.5, Spain 1.5
Georgia 2.5, China 1.5
England 2, Croatia 2
Armenia (first team) 3, Belarus 1



Juergen Klinsmann of FC Bayern Munich (L) and Vicente Engonga of FC Valencia fight for the ball during the second leg of the first round of the UEFA Cup Bayern Munich against FC Valencia in Munich. Valencia won the first match by 3-0 and lost the second by 1-0 (Reuters photo)

Nagano Olympics criticised as 500-day countdown begins

NAGANO (AFP) — The 500-day countdown to the 1998 winter Olympics here began on an acrimonious note Wednesday when the mayor of Lillehammer, which hosted the previous winter Olympics, criticised the environmental awareness of Japanese organisers.

As five couriers and two dogs from the 1994 Olympic town in Norway arrived here after a 16,000-kilometer journey with an "environmental message," Mayor Audun Tron criticised the construction of a super-express train line from Tokyo to Nagano.

"I don't think the construction project is environmentally friendly as it goes through the beautiful landscape of Japan," said Tron, who arrived here overnight to greet the team, which left Lillehammer during the closing ceremonies of the 1994 Games.

He was also disappointed that the traditional-style building of Nagano central station had been torn down to make way for a new terminal as part of the super-express project to be completed in October next year.

"It was a beautiful building. I didn't like what I saw," he said.

The couriers who carried their environmental message here crossed the Siberian plain mostly by dog-sled along the Arctic Ocean and took a sailboat from Kamchatka to Yokohama in a journey interrupted by lack of sponsors' money and a series of home leaves.

The team travelled up to this provincial Alpine city by bike.

The message, as read by iron in a ceremony at the city hall, urged Nagano to take care of the environment in Olympic preparations and operations and "choose environmentally friendly products and environmentally aware business partners to ensure sustainable development."

The Nagano Olympiad has been denounced by local ecologists as "builders' Games" as most of its facilities had to be newly built, along with the super-express train line and a super-highway between Tokyo and Nagano, some 200 kilometres apart.

The Nagano mayor, however, promised to carry on Lillehammer's advocacy of environmental friendly Olympics "and pass it on to Salt Lake City in 2002."

RJ to host World Airline Squash tournament

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The 11th World Airline Squash Tournament (WAST) will open at Al Hussein Sports City October 6-11 with more than 17 international airline companies participating.

The tournament, held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, will be organised by the Royal Jordanian Squash Club and is expected to bring together over 22 participating teams in the six-day event.

The hosting of the competition in Amman follows last year's first place win for Royal Jordanian in the 10th tournament in Dubai after a convincing 5-2 win over British Airways.

Captain Jawdat Abdul Munem, president of the Royal

Jordanian Squash Club, said he hoped that this tournament would be a success as the Royal Jordanian team is prepared to ensure a second consecutive title win.

He said preparations were underway to host the teams from participating world airlines companies: Ansett Australia, Ansett New Zealand, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Hanning Cargo Dublin, Lufthansa, New Zealand, New Guinea, Emirates, Quantas Australia, Swissair, Gulf Air and Royal Jordanian.

Captain Abdul Munem said that the teams will have a chance to visit Jordan and its historical sites. "A full programme will await players of participating teams to visit the historical sites of Jordan," said Abdul Munem.

Royal Jordanian's team will include players Mohamad Saeed, Hamed Saeed, Yazeed Adas, Wael Tabalat, and Qutaibah Taha. The ladies team is still undecided.

Brazil heads FIFA football rankings

Zurich (AFP) — Leading and selected FIFA football rankings published Wednesday (Previous ranking in brackets):
1 Brazil (1) 67.86pts
2 Germany (2) 64.43
3 France (3) 61.57
4 Czech Rep (4) 61.41
5 Russia (8) 59.70
6 Italy (5) 58.99

7 Holland (6) 58.82
8 Sweden (8) 58.43
9 Denmark (10) 58.00
10 Spain (7) 57.72
11 Colombia (11) 57.56
12 England (13) 56.01
13 Mexico (14) 54.91
14 Portugal (14) 54.37
15 Romania (18) 53.21
16 Zambia (15) 53.11
17 S. Africa (16) 52.95

18 U.S. (20) 52.66
19 Ghana (19) 51.59
20 Japan (26) 51.31
23 Norway (25) 50.77
32 R. of Ireland (37) 45.95
39 Scotland (35) 44.14
41 S. Korea (41) 42.05
51 Nigeria (49) 38.58
52 Australia (61) 37.91
55 China (53) 36.56
65 N. Ireland (63) 35.30
67 Zimbabwe (67) 34.16
68 Wales (68) 33.62
93 Singapore (89) 27.57
91 Malaysia (108) 27.71
117 India (116) 19.37
122 H. Kong (119) 18.94
136 N. Zealand (135) 14.25
137 S. Lanka (135) 14.08

F.A. charge Coventry's Atkinson, Strachan

LONDON (R) — Coventry manager Ron Atkinson and his assistant Gordon Strachan were both charged by the English Football Association (F.A.) on Wednesday with bringing the game into disrepute.

The same charge was also brought against the Premier League club's central defender Liam Daish following incidents during a match with Chelsea at Stamford Bridge in August.

Atkinson and Strachan were seen on television remonstrating from the touchline with officials following a highly-disputed goal after Chelsea's Dan Petrescu appeared to handle the ball but was

not penalised and Frank Leboeuf went on to score. Daish was sent off by referee Paul Danson for foul and abusive language during the melee that followed Leboeuf's goal. The charge against the Ireland International relates to an incident following the game outside the referee's dressing room.

All three have been given 14 days to respond to the charges and decide whether to request a personal hearing.

Daish was in trouble again on Tuesday when he was sent off in Coventry's league cup victory at his former club Birmingham.

It is the second time in a matter of weeks that Atkinson and Strachan have been charged with disrepute.

In a recent reserve game against West Bromwich Albion, Strachan refused

to leave the field after being sent-off for two bookable offences, causing referee Tony Green to take all the players off the field. Atkinson was later involved in a verbal confrontation with the referee in the dressing room.

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NORTH
♠ K 6 4 3
♥ 9
♦ K 10 6 6
♣ Q J 8 3
WEST
♠ J 10 7
♥ 8 2
♦ Q J 7
♣ 10 6 5 4 3
EAST
♠ Q 5
♥ J 7 6
♦ A Q 4 3 2
♣ K 6 7
SOUTH
♠ A 9 6 2
♥ A K Q 10 8 5 4
♦ 5
♣ A
The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
30 Pass 3NT Pass
40 Pass 50 Pass
60 Pass 60 Pass
Opening lead: Jack of ♠
South, declaring an impossible slam, found a way to take advantage of the fact that the opening leader was not aware of all the assets of the defending side. Combined with a goodly slice of luck, the slam, played in the Danish team championship, romped home.
It is not easy to stay out of slam with the North-South holding. If all North's minor-suit honors were exchanged for the queen of spades, chances would be excellent. Even the jack of spades would make the slam dependent, largely on the spade finesse.
West led the jack of spades, and dummy did not bring any joy to declarer's heart. It seemed that a sure loser in both spades and diamonds could not be avoided. However, declarer found a way to make use of a fortunate lie of the cards by keeping the right defender on lead.
Since the ace of diamonds might have been led if West held that card, declarer allowed West to hold the lead by ducking the first trick both in dummy and in hand! (Note that East could not play the queen without allowing declarer to bring in the suit for no loss by winning and then finessing the eight.) After long thought, West continued with the ten of spades. Declarer won the ace, drew trumps in three rounds, then cashed the ace of clubs.
After crossing to dummy by overtaking the nine of spades with the king, drawing the last spade in the process, declarer led the queen of clubs. East covered and declarer ruffed. The eight of spades provided the entry to the table to discard the diamond loser on the jack of clubs.
Just another small slam bid and made!

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Sharon promises 600 new houses for Golan settlers

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon plans to build 600 new homes for Jewish settlers in the Israeli occupied Golan Heights, a settler leader said Wednesday.

The homes will be built in three locations near existing settlements and may eventually become independent communities, Golan settler leader Yehuda Wollman said.

Such a construction would likely drive a deeper wedge between Israel and Syria. Peace talks between the two sides have been stalled since Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu came to power in June.

Syria demands that Israel return all of the Golan, which Israel seized in the 1967 Mideast war, but Mr. Netanyahu has said he would not give back the strategic plateau.

Mr. Wollman met with Mr. Sharon on Tuesday and said the minister promised him that 600 new homes would be built in the Golan over the next two years.

Two hundred homes will be built near the settlement of Mevo Hama and 400 in two separate locations near the Maaleh Gamla settlement, Mr. Wollman told Israel Radio. Work will begin in 10 months, he said.

About 15,000 settlers live on the Golan, in addition to 15,000 Druze Arabs. Golan settlers have presented plans to Mr. Netanyahu to increase the settler population to 25,000 over the next four years.

Sharon spokesman Raanan Gissin said Mr. Sharon told the Golan council members he would work to ensure the construction of the homes, but that the construction had to go through bureaucratic procedures before it could be approved.

"The minister said he wants to push that, but the procedure is that it has to go through the land administration which must check legality, cost, land allocation, etc.," Mr. Gissin said. "Of course it is part of the government policy in terms of enlarging, expanding and strengthening settlements on the Golan Heights."

During Mr. Sharon's term as housing minister in the early 1990s, he rarely provided details about the construction drive in Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza he oversaw at the time.

In his new post, Mr. Sharon has proposed paving new roads that would connect Jewish settlements in the West Bank in an effort to solidify Israeli control over the area.



PROTESTS IN JERUSALEM: Israeli policemen put a head lock on a Palestinian man as they arrest him during scuffles at the Damascus Gate in Arab East Jerusalem on Wednesday after hundreds of Palestinians turned out to demonstrate against the opening of a tunnel on Tuesday that links the Via Dolorosa in the Muslim Quarter with the Western Wall (see story on page one) (Reuters photo)

Netanyahu should be hospitalised — Cairo press

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian government newspaper published another personal attack on Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday, saying the Israeli premier did not require a psychiatrist, as suggested by an Egyptian official, but the services of an entire hospital.

"The Israeli prime minister does not need a psychiatrist but an entire hospital to help him of his obsessions (about Israel's security) which threaten to destroy the peace process," said the paper, Al-Ahram Al-Masri.

"Whoever blows the war trumpets is fit only for a locked room in a psychiatric hospital," the newspaper said.

It added that Israel would stay "isolated from the Arab World for as long as its policies remain distant from the path of peace."

The newspaper also shrugged off Israeli protests over the remarks made about Mr. Netanyahu in recent days, calling them "unjustified."

It said a comment by senior Foreign Ministry official Adel Al-Saifi, who chided Netanyahu for his "clinical fear" about

Israel's security, and suggested the Israeli leader "needs a psychiatrist," was "not unrealistic."

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy warned Egypt's ambassador Tuesday that the personal attacks on Mr. Netanyahu were threatening bilateral relations.

Mr. Levy was quoted by Israeli public radio as telling Egyptian Ambassador Mohammad Bassiouny that his government "cannot play a role in the peace process if the attacks of recent days continue."

"Egypt must do away completely with this new manner of action which revolts every Israeli citizen," Mr. Levy told reporters after their meeting.

Mr. Mubarak's top policy advisor Osama Al-Baz on Tuesday denounced the personal attacks on Mr. Netanyahu.

"Our policy is opposed to personal attacks and to such character assassinations," he told Israel Television.

"All officials must refrain from useless comments," he said, calling on Israel to advance the stalled peace process with the Palestinians.

IFOR troops patrol Bosnian village amid fears of clashes

JUSICI, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AFP) — U.S. soldiers on Wednesday patrolled in the eastern Bosnian village of Jusici, where Serb police have ordered a handful of Muslims to leave, prompting fears of clashes.

By late afternoon the situation was calm and there was no sign of Serb police in or around the devastated village on the Serb side of the former confrontation line, whose Muslim inhabitants were chased out at the beginning of the war in 1992.

"The situation is quiet as you can see," said Captain John Kershaw, who acts as a liaison officer between the U.S. and Russian contingents of the multinational peacekeeping force.

He said, however, that the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)-led peace implementation force (IFOR) was maintaining surveillance of the area.

Serbs had ordered the Muslims, who arrived last weekend, to leave by Wednesday, but this deadline has been put back two days to allow a solution to be found, U.N. spokesman Alexander Ivanko said in Sarajevo.

According to Capt. Kershaw, the Serbs who control the region "are exercising great restraint. We spoke to the Serbs and they have agreed to wait so the highest authorities can work this out," he said.

Between 200 and 300 exiles have returned, they say to repair their devastated homes.

Some of them, however, are armed, and NATO had denounced the repatriation saying it constituted a provocation.

NATO chiefs, meanwhile, expressed strong support for a follow-on mission to the peacekeeping force IFOR Wednesday as Bosnia's newly-elected President Alija Izetbegovic was due to address the U.N. General Assembly.

Mr. Izetbegovic was representing his country as head of a new-style rotating presidency elected earlier this month that is supposed to symbolise the unity of the country torn apart by nearly four years of war.

In Bergen, Norway a senior U.S. NATO official said the allies voiced "strong support" for a new mission to prevent war reigniting in Bosnia next year after the current NATO mandate ends on Dec. 20.

With Bosnia's general elections out of the way, the ground is being prepared for the inauguration of Bosnia's new joint governing machinery. However, Mr. Izetbegovic and his Croat and Serb counterparts have yet to agree where they will meet.

With presidential elections looming, the United States has declined to commit itself to any position on either extending the NATO military presence or whether U.S. troops would take part.

But the discussions in Oslo mark a new stage for the NATO as it begins active military planning for options to preserve the peace after the IFOR ends its mission.

NATO Secretary General Javier Solana said last week that the alliance could not abandon Bosnia at the end of the year, and a consensus is developing on the need for extending NATO's military presence.

German Defence Minister Volker Ruehe has said a force of 20,000 to 25,000 will be needed and offered to contribute up to 3,000 troops. Spain and Portugal also have said they were willing to supply some troops.

NAF criticises deputies who resigned, says it will okay resignations

By Tareq Momani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In reference to the recent resignation of deputies Nazih Ammarin and Trad Al Qadi, the National Action Front (NAF), which groups 19 deputies, Wednesday announced it will approve the resignation of any deputy at any parliamentary session in the future.

NAF President Abdul Hadi Majali, minister of public works and housing, said at a press conference held at the Hall of Pictures in Parliament that those who submit resignations are not serving those who voted for them but rather shirking responsibilities and duties.

"We regret such a move by some deputies who neglect their duties," he said. "NAF and other fronts believe in open and frank dialogue and that there is a need of a constructive opposition in order to help serve our national issues in a democratic atmosphere."

He emphasised that the duty of the legislative authority is to control and supervise the executive authority.

Mr. Majali added that the recent decisions by the executive authority to change the mechanism of bread subsidy were based on frank dialogue with all

parliamentary fronts.

"We in the National Action Front want to grant the executive authority the chance to prove the outcome of its decisions otherwise, we will hold it to account for its actions," he said.

Mr. Majali called the government to supervise and control the prices and charge everyone tampering with them.

The NAF also called all parties to the peace process to rise to their commitments to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the region and that the Israeli government should resume negotiations with the concerned parties.

Mr. Majali condemned the Israeli aggression on the Christian and Islamic shrines in Jerusalem and the Israeli efforts to construct new settlements were in themselves an obstacle to a comprehensive and just peace.

Mr. Majali called all Arab countries to adopt a united stand to lift the embargo imposed on Iraq and its people.

"We urge all the Arabs to help the embargoed Iraq. We refuse any foreign intervention in its internal affairs and call for the unity of Iraq and refuse any partitioning of its land," Mr. Majali said.

Taleban claims to be on Kabul doorsteps

KABUL (AP) — Taleban soldiers were claiming Wednesday to have entered the Afghan capital rolling over government troops on the eastern edge of Kabul.

"We are fighting around the customs house, which is about six kilometres from the presidential palace," said Maulvi Hasanullah, a Taleban spokesman in Jalalabad, about 125 kilometres from Kabul.

Taleban soldiers have captured Pul-e-Charkhi, an eastern suburb and a stronghold of President Burhanuddin Rabbani's, he said.

The report could not be independently confirmed.

The Taleban has been advancing since early morning Wednesday after taking control of the strategic eastern town of Sarobi, about 60 kilometres east of Kabul.

At least a 100 soldiers on both sides were killed in the fighting, according to government soldiers returning to Kabul from the frontline.

Ragged and covered in dirt dozens of frontline government soldiers returned to the besieged capital to announce their defeat at Sarobi.

They told reporters in the capital that the fighting had been brutal. They said the Taleban attacked from the south, sending waves of soldiers and tanks across heavily mined fields.

There were several reports of air raids by government jets.

It was not immediately known whether Mr. Rabbani was still in the capital. Taleban sources in neighbouring Pakistan said he was preparing to flee.

In recent weeks the Taleban army of religious students turned guerrilla fighters has been tightening its siege on Kabul, pushing government soldiers out of eastern Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar provinces.

Mr. Rabbani has accused neighbouring Pakistan of arming and training Taleban fighters.

On Tuesday Mr. Rabbani's government said a rebel Russian-made Antonov 32 aircraft landed at Baghram air force base with 32 Taleban defectors on board. The aircraft, they said, had been en route to Pakistan from the Taleban stronghold in western Herat.

Pakistan's foreign ministry denied aiding the Taleban.

"This is absolutely untrue and there are no Pakistani military personnel engaged in fighting anywhere in Afghanistan," said a Pakistan Foreign Ministry release.

The Taleban are demanding Mr. Rabbani's resignation. They say they want to establish a strict Islamic government. They adhere to a strict Islamic code than Mr. Rabbani's coalition government of five factions.

Netanyahu honeymoon over but hopes of peace getting chillier

TEL AVIV (R) — When Benjamin Netanyahu clasped the hand of his former enemy Yasser Arafat, Arabs hoped the ice that had shrouded Middle East peace talks since the Israeli election had been broken.

Now, after 100 days of Mr. Netanyahu as Israel's prime minister, the chill in Israeli-Arab relations runs deeper.

Mr. Netanyahu, who heads a coalition of conservatives, Jewish settlers and rabbis, has, however, thwarted critics who said he would freeze the peace process.

He soon realised, political analysts and diplomats say, that to stand still meant displacing his guardian ally the United States, which for five years has been nudging Arab and Jew towards a settlement on the basis of land-

for-peace.

So, after much hesitation, Mr. Netanyahu agreed to meet Palestinian President Arafat and resume talks on implementing the 1993 Oslo agreement on self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza signed by the ousted Labour government.

The Clinton administration, which had openly backed Labour in the election, sighed with relief. In briefings, U.S. diplomats papered over the cracks in their own and Mr. Netanyahu's foreign policy, stressing that the new government was committed to Oslo but needed time to find its feet.

Israeli officials expect the grace period with Washington to last until after the U.S. presidential elections in November as

neither candidate wishes to be seen as tough on Israel.

For the Arabs and Mr. Netanyahu's opponents within Israel, the new prime minister's honeymoon period is long past. They accuse his Likud-led government of substituting movement for action.

"Until now I don't know whether he is a man of talk or action," said political commentator Hanan Crystal. "The meeting with Arafat was a show. Until we see how he handles Hebron we will not know whether he has made the transition from a good political campaigner to statesman."

Other analysts and Western diplomats agree Hebron will be the acid test for Likud's commitment to Oslo. Mr. Netanyahu has delayed redeploying Israeli

troops in the West Bank town as agreed by Labour, citing security concerns, a mantra of the right-wing. Hebron is a microcosm of some of the most explosive issues still to be negotiated — the future of Jewish settlements on Arab land and control of places holy to both Jews and Muslims.

Honouring commitments like Hebron could cost Mr. Netanyahu right-wing support in his coalition. He could even lose cabinet ministers like Benny Begin, son of Menachem Begin, and staunch settlement supporter Ariel Sharon, analysts say.

But Labour is still the single biggest party in parliament and would back Mr. Netanyahu on Oslo implementation. Analysts believe Mr.

Netanyahu has little choice but to work with Mr. Arafat and the United States on the peace process, albeit without an explicit commitment to trade occupied Arab land for peace. The question is how fast and how far.

"When we came in to office we were told that we would halt everything, nothing will move and so on," Mr. Netanyahu said when asked by reporters about Arab charges that his first 100 days had been "a disaster."

"We said no, we come with a different agenda of how to achieve peace and we intend to negotiate. First, I said we will create informal contacts with the Palestinian Authority. We did. Secondly we'll create formal contacts on the ministerial level. We did.

Thirdly we'll arrive at a package, a way, of addressing the outstanding issues. We did. And fourth we'll begin to negotiate on the key issues, all of them, including Hebron, and we're doing that."

"It's not a snail's pace advance," he said. Mr. Netanyahu's list does not impress Arabs who see him as stalling on Oslo while expanding Jewish settlement on Palestinian land and tightening Israel's grip on Arab East Jerusalem.

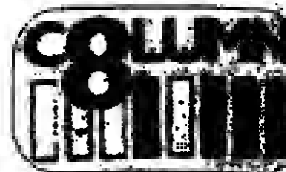
"This is a fictitious peace process of meetings without substance and action, while on the ground they carry out actions that totally negate the peace process," Palestinian Cabinet Minister Hanan Ashrawi said.

Critics say Mr. Netanyahu's biggest

achievement in the past 100 days has been to unite the Arabs. Tension has risen with Syria and Lebanon. Egypt, Israel's first peace partner and a key player in current regional diplomacy, has been unusually sharp in its public criticism.

Analysts believe, however, that all sides have invested so much in the peace process that they are unwilling to give up yet, not least for fear of angering Washington.

"Netanyahu is not an idiot," said press commentator Shimon Shiffer. "He will learn how to govern. He wants political success and he knows that most Israelis voted for some kind of peace process with the Palestinians. If he doesn't achieve that, Israelis will throw him out next time."



Thief caught hiding in police station too

BANGKOK (R) — A Thai thief has learned the hard way that appearances can be deceiving. Suriya Umphuporn took refuge in the toilet of a Bangkok police station after snatching a purse on the street Tuesday, mistaking its Thai-style roof for that of a Buddhist temple, police said Wednesday.

Police stormed the restroom and arrested Mr. Suriya, 22, after his prolonged occupation of the room aroused their suspicion. Mr. Suriya told police that he was from a poor northeastern province and had arrived in the capital to look for a job.

He said he stole the purse from a woman when he ran out of money. Mr. Suriya is being detained on charges of robbery pending a formal trial, police said.

Drug smugglers caught soaking clothes in cocaine

BRASILIA (R) — Brazilian police arrested four Chinese nationals trying to smuggle clothes soaked in cocaine, national Globo Television reported.

Globo said the Chinese had tried to cross from Paraguay into Brazil carrying T-shirts, ladies' underwear and other garments that had been immersed in cocaine dissolved in water. Federal Border Agents in the city of Foz De Iguaçu discovered the novel smuggling method when they tested the clothes with chemicals.

Old tramp says world bums summit too new age

MARDEL PLATA, Argentina (R) — International tramps opened their first world conference at an Argentine seaside resort Tuesday but a veteran hobo said modern vagabonds were often merely trendy vegetarians. Organisers said some 300 delegates from as far afield as Greece, Canada and Colombia might turn up in Mar Del Plata. "Many people suffer from stress, which is one of the illnesses that work gives you," Pedro Ribeiro, the 57-year-old founder of the Free Tramps Movement, told Reuters. Mario Alonso, a bearded potter in a greasy cap, came to Mar Del Plata from his adobe home near El Bolson, an idyllic refuge for ecologists and ageing hippies among the lakes and mountains of Argentina's far southern region of Patagonia. A vegetarian who plans to give a talk on bartering goods and thus avoiding money, Mr. Alonso proudly demonstrated his tramp's dining kit made up of seven different-sized tin cans for use as a stove, tea pot, plates and cups.

Diana invades White House

WASHINGTON (R) — She only smiled and didn't speak, but Princess Diana Tuesday led what first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton called "one of the nicest British invasions" of the White House. Mrs. Clinton, drawing attention to efforts in the fight against breast cancer, hosted an elegant East Room breakfast featuring Napoleon of herbed eggs and roasted tomatoes, a select guest list that ranged from fashion designers to media moguls.

Taleban sets up

KABUL (R) — Taleban fighters have set up a government in Afghanistan capital, according to a spokesman. The spokesman said the government would be based in Kabul and would have a say in the country's future.

The Taleban movement has been active in Afghanistan since 1994, when it began to take control of the country. It has since gained significant support and has been a major force in the country's politics.

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